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MEMOIRS OF BENVENUTO CELLINI; A FLORENTINE ARTIST; WRITTEN BY HIMSELF

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EDITOR'S NOTE

THOMAS ROSCOE'S version of Benvenuto Cellini's Autobiography was first published in 1822. It cannot be held to be a classic translation, but it offers a very fair, provisional transcript into expedient and cautious English of the bold original. Addington Symonds pointed out the errors, and the deliberate and other misrenderings, of Roscoe's version when explaining his own method in dealing with the book. At the same time even he acknowledged that it had the merit of "a sound, old-fashioned style." Those who care to do so can, with the aid of Addington Symonds's translation and the original, easily increase the sensation of this history of the most "Italianate of all Italians," which Goethe himself rendered into German, which Horace Walpole thought "more amusing than any novel," and which Symonds declared would compare in its adventures, and their "variety and ever-pungent interest," with "Gil Blas," the "Comte de Monte Christo," "Quentin Durward," or "Les Trois Mousquetaires."

Thomas Roscoe translated several other works into English, and wrote also poems and a couple of novels; and helped to give picturesque topography an increased vogue by his various books of travel, including his "Wanderings and Excursions in North Wales," 1836, and his corresponding volume on South Wales, 1837, which are still valued today for their fine illustrations after Turner, David Cox, and other artists.

Other translations by Thomas Roscoe are: Sismondi, "Literature of the South of Europe," 1823; "Italian Novelists," 1825; "German Novelists," 1826; "Spanish Novelists," 1832; Potter, "Memoirs of Scipio de Ricci,"

etc., 1828; Silvio Pellico, "Imprisonments," 1833; S. Pelli "Duties of Men," 1834; Navarrete, "Life of Cervante 1839; Kohl, "Travels in England," 1845.

Other English translations of "Benvenuto Cellini" a T. Nugent, 1771; T. Roscoe, 1822; J. A. Symonds, 1 (1887); A. Macdonell, 1903 (Temple Autobiographies).

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BENVENUTO CELLINI

MEMOIRS OF
BENVENUTO CELLINI

CHAPTER I

It is a duty incumbent on upright and credible men of all ranks, who have performed anything noble or praiseworthy, to record, in their own writing, the events of their lives; yet they should not commence this honourable task before they have passed their fortieth year. Such, at least, is my opinion, now that I have completed my fifty-eighth year, and am settled in Florence, where, considering the numerous ills that constantly attend human life, I perceive that I have never before been so free from vexations and calamities, or possessed of so great a share of content and health, as at this period. Looking back on some delightful and happy events of my life, and on many misfortunes so truly overwhelming, that the appalling retrospect makes me wonder how I have reached this age, in vigour and prosperity, through God's goodness, I have resolved to publish an account of my life. And although men whose exertions have been crowned with any degree of honour, and who have rendered themselves conspicuous to the world, ought, perhaps, to regard only that personal merit to which they owe their celebrity; yet as in this world it is necessary to live like other people, I must, in commencing my narrative, satisfy the public on some few points to which its curiosity is usually directed; the first of which is to ascertain whether a man is descended from a virtuous and ancient family.

My name, then, is Benvenuto Cellini, and I am the son of Maestro Giovanni, the son of Andrea, the son of Cristofano Cellini; my mother was Maria Lisabetta, daughter to Stefano Granacci: and both my parents were citizens of Florence. It appears from the ancient chronicles compiled by natives of that city, men highly deserving of credit, that it was built after the model of Rome. This is evident from the vestiges of the Colosseum, and the hot baths, near the Holy Cross: the capitol was an ancient market-place: the rotunda, which is still entire, was built for a temple of Mars, and is now called San Giovanni's church. This is so evident that it cannot be denied; but the above-mentioned structures are of much smaller dimensions than those of Rome. It is said that they were erected by Julius Cæsar, in conjunction with some other Roman patricians, who, having subdued and taken Fiesole, in this very place founded a city, and each of them undertook to erect one of these remarkable edifices. Julius Cæsar had a very gallant officer of the first rank in his army, named Florentius of Cellino, which is a castle within two miles of Monte Fiascone: this Florentius having taken up his quarters under Fiesole, where Florence at present stands, to be near the river Arno for the convenience of his army, all the soldiers and others who had any business with that officer used to say, "Let us go to Florence;" as well because the name of the officer was Florentius, as because on the spot where he had fixed his headquarters there was great plenty of flowers. Thus in the infancy of the town, the elegant appellation of Florence seeming to Julius Cæsar appropriate, and its allusion to flowers appearing auspicious, he gave it the name of Florentia; at the same time paying a compliment to his valiant officer, to whom he was the more attached, because he had promoted him from a very humble station, and considered his merit as in some measure a creation of his own. The other name of *Fluentia*, which the learned inventors and investigators of the connection of names

pretend that Florence obtained on account of the Arno's *flowing* through the town, cannot be admitted; because the Tiber flows through Rome, the Po through Ferrara, the Saone through Lyons, the Seine through Paris, which cities have various names, no way derived from the course of those rivers. I believe the matter to be as I have stated, and am of opinion that this city takes its name from the valiant captain Florentius.

I have also learned that there are some of our family of Cellini in Ravenna, a much more ancient city than Florence, and that they are people of quality: there are also some of the family in Pisa, and in several other parts of Christendom; besides a few families that still remain in Tuscany. Most of these have been devoted to arms. It is not many years since a beardless youth, of the name of Luca Cellini, encountered a most valiant and practised soldier, named Francesco da Vicorati, who had often fought in the lists: Luca, who had only courage on his side, vanquished and slew him; evincing such prowess and intrepidity as astonished the spectators, who all expected a contrary result. So that, upon the whole, I think I may safely boast of being descended from valiant ancestors.

How far I have contributed to the honour of my family, which, considering our present condition, arising from well-known causes, and considering my profession, cannot be in any very great degree, I shall relate in a proper place; thinking it much more honourable to have sprung from an humble origin, and laid a foundation of honour for my descendants, than to have been descended from a noble lineage, and to have disgraced or extinguished it by my own base degeneracy. I shall therefore now proceed to inform the reader how it pleased God that I should come into the world.

My ancestors lived in retirement in the valley of Ambra, where they were lords of considerable domains: they were all trained to arms, and distinguished for military prowess.

One of the family, a youth named Cristofano, had a fierce dispute with some of their neighbours and friends; and because the chief relations on both sides had engaged in the dispute, and it seemed likely that the flames of discord would end in the destruction of the two families, the eldest people, having maturely considered the matter, unanimously agreed to remove the two young men who began the quarrel out of the way. The opposite party obliged their kinsman to withdraw to Siena, and Cristofano's parents sent him to Florence, where they purchased a small house for him in the Via Chiara, from the monastery of St. Ursula, with a pretty good estate near the bridge of Rifredi. This Cristofano married in Florence, and had several sons and daughters: the daughters were portioned off; and the sons divided the remainder of their father's substance between them. After his decease, the house of Via Chiara, with some other property of no great amount, fell to one of the above-mentioned sons, whose name was Andrea. He took a wife, by whom he had four male children: the name of the first was Girolamo, that of the second Bartolomeo; the third was Giovanni, my father; the fourth was Francesco.

Andrea Cellini, my grandfather, was tolerably well versed in the architecture of those days, and made it his profession. Giovanni, my father, cultivated it more than any of his brothers; and since, according to the opinion of Vitruvius, those who are desirous of succeeding in this art, should, amongst other things, know something of music and drawing, Giovanni, having acquired great proficiency in the art of designing, began to apply himself to music. He learned to play admirably well upon the viol and flute; and being of a very studious disposition, he hardly ever went abroad.

His next-door neighbour was Stefano Granacci, who had several daughters of extraordinary beauty. Giovanni soon became sensible to the charms of one of them, named Lisabetta; and at length grew so deeply enamoured that

he asked her in marriage. Their fathers being intimate, and next-door neighbours, it was no difficult matter to bring about the match, as both parties thought they found their account in it. First of all, the two old men concluded the marriage, and then began to talk of the portion; but they could not rightly agree on that point, for Andrea said to Stefano, "My son Giovanni is the best youth in Florence, and even in all Italy; and if I had thought of procuring him a wife before, I might have obtained for him the best portion in Florence amongst persons of our rank." Stefano answered, "You have a thousand reasons on your side, but I have five daughters and several sons; so that, all things duly considered, it is as much as I can afford." Giovanni had stood some time listening to their conversation unperceived by them, but on hearing this he suddenly interrupted them, saying, "Ah! father, it is the girl that I love and desire, and not her money. Wretched is he who marries to repair his fortune by means of his wife's dowry. You boast that I am possessed of some talents: is it then to be supposed that I am unable to maintain my wife, and supply her necessities? I want nothing of you but your consent; and I must give you to understand that the girl shall be mine; as to the portion, you may take it yourself." Andrea Cellini, who was somewhat eccentric, was not a little displeased at this; but in a few days Giovanni took his wife home, and never afterwards required any portion of her father.

They enjoyed their consecrated love for eighteen years; but had no children, which they ardently desired. At the expiration of the eighteenth year, however, Giovanni's wife miscarried of two male children, through the unskilfulness of her medical attendants. She became pregnant again, and gave birth to a girl, who was called Cosa, after my father's mother. Two years after, she was once more with child, and, as women in her condition are liable to certain longings, hers being exactly the same upon this

occasion as before, it was generally thought that she would have another girl, and it had been already agreed to give her the name of Reparata, after my mother's mother. It happened that she was brought to bed precisely the night of All-Saints-day, in the year 1500, at half-an-hour past four. The midwife, who was sensible that the family expected the birth of a female, as soon as she had washed the child and wrapped it up in fine swaddling-clothes, came softly up to my father, and said to him, "I here bring you a fine present which you little expected." My father, who was of a philosophical disposition, and happened to be then walking about, said, "What God gives me, I shall always receive thankfully;" but, taking off the clothes, he saw with his own eyes the unexpected boy. Clasping his hands together, he lifted up his eyes to Heaven, saying: "Lord, I thank Thee from the bottom of my heart for this present, which is very dear and welcome to me." The standers-by asked him, joyfully, how he proposed to call the child: he made them no other answer than, "He is WELCOME." And this name of Welcome (BENVENUTO) he resolved to give me at the font; and so I was christened accordingly.

Andrea Cellini was still living when I was about three years of age; and he was then above a hundred. As they were one day removing a water-pipe, a large scorpion, which they had not perceived, came out of it: the scorpion descended upon the ground and had got under a great bench, when I, seeing it, ran and caught it in my hand. This scorpion was of such a size, that whilst I held it in my little hand it put out its tail on one side, and on the other darted its two mouths. I ran overjoyed to my grandfather, crying out, "Grandfather, look at my pretty little crab!" The good old man, who knew it to be a scorpion, was so frightened, and so apprehensive for my safety, that he seemed ready to drop down dead, and begged me with great eagerness to give the creature to him; but I grasped it the harder, and cried, for I did not

choose to part with it. My father, who was in the house, ran to us upon hearing the noise; but, stupefied with terror at the sight of that venomous reptile, he could think of no means of rescuing me from my perilous situation. But happening just at that instant to espy a pair of scissors, he laid hold of them, and by caressing and playing with me, he contrived to cut off the tail and head of the scorpion. Then finding I had received no harm, he pronounced it a happy omen.

When I was about five years of age, my father happened to be in a little room in which they had been washing, and where there was a good oak fire burning: with a fiddle in his hand he sang and played near the fire, the weather being exceedingly cold. Looking into the fire, he saw a little animal resembling a lizard, which lived and enjoyed itself in the hottest flames. Instantly perceiving what it was, he called for my sister, and after he had shown us the creature, he gave me a box on the ear: I fell a-crying, while he, soothing me with his caresses, said, "My dear child, I don't give you that blow for any fault you have committed, but that you may remember that the little lizard which you see in the fire is a salamander; a creature which no one that I have heard of ever beheld before." So saying, he embraced me, and gave me some money.

My father began to teach me to play upon the flute, and to sing by note; and though I was very young, at an age when children, generally speaking, are highly pleased with piping and such amusements, I had the utmost aversion for it, and played and sang merely in obedience to his authority. My father at that time made the most curious organs with pipes of wood, the finest and best harpsichords that were to be seen in those days, and most beautiful and excellent viols, lutes, and harps. He was an engineer, and constructed a variety of machines, such as draw-bridges, fulling-mills, &c. He worked admirably in ivory, and was the first artist of his time in that line.

But as he was also musically inclined, insomuch that this art had engrossed his whole thoughts and attention, he was requested by the court musicians to join with them; and as he was willing to oblige them, they made him one of their band. Lorenzo de' Medici, and Pietro, his son, who were very much his friends, seeing afterwards that he attached himself entirely to music, and neglected his business as an engineer, and his admirable art of working in ivory, removed him from that place. This my father highly resented, and thought himself very ill used by his patrons. He therefore on a sudden applied again to his business, and made a looking-glass, about a cubit diameter, of bone and ivory, adorned with carved figures and foliages, with the finest polish and the most admirable elegance of design. It was in the form of a wheel; the mirror was placed in the middle; round it were seven circles, in which the seven virtues were carved in ivory and black bone; and both the mirror and the figures of the virtues were balanced in such a manner, that the wheel turning round, all the virtues moved at the same time, and had a weight to counterpoise them at their feet, which kept them in a straight direction. As he had a smattering of the Latin language, he carved a verse round the mirror, the purport of which was, "that on which side soever the wheel of fortune turns, virtue stands unshaken upon her feet."

Rota sum semper, quò quò me verto, stat virtus.

A short time after, his place of court-musician was restored to him. At that period (which was before I was born) these musicians were all eminent artisans; some of them being manufacturers of wool, and others of silk, belonged to the *Arti Maggiori:* hence my father did not think this profession beneath him; and his first desire with regard to me was, that I should become a great player on the flute. I on my part was never more offended than when he touched upon this subject, and

when he told me that, if I had a mind, I might become the best musician in the universe. As I have already observed, my father was a staunch friend to the house of Medici, so that when Pietro was banished from Florence, he entrusted him with many affairs of consequence. The illustrious Pietro Soderini afterwards being elected to the government, when my father was in his service in quality of musician, that great statesman, discovering his extraordinary genius, began to have recourse to him in many matters of importance, showing him thenceforward the greatest kindness.

At this time my father, as I was of a tender age, once caused me to be carried upon a person's shoulders to play upon the flute before the senate, and one of their servants supported me all the time. After the music was over, Soderini, then gonfalonier, or chief magistrate, amused himself with my prattle, and giving me sweetmeats, said to my father: "Giovanni, you must teach him your other two elegant arts, as well as that of music." My father replied, that he did not intend I should follow any other business but that of playing upon the flute, and composing; for if it pleased God to spare his days, he hoped to make me the first man in the world in that profession. To this one of the old gentlemen present replied: "Ah, master Cellini, mind what the gonfalonier says; why should the boy aim at nothing higher all his life than being a good musician?"

Thus some time passed till the Medici family was restored. The Cardinal de' Medici, who was afterwards Pope Leo X., immediately upon his recall showed the utmost kindness to my father. While the family was in exile, the balls were removed from the coat of arms in the front of their palace; and the citizens had caused to be painted in their place the figure of a red cross, which was the arms of the republic. But at the sudden return of the Medicean princes the red cross was effaced, and upon the said escutcheon were again painted the red balls,

and the golden field was replaced with the most beautiful decorations. My father, who had rather a turn for poetry, with somewhat of a prophetic vein—doubtless, a divine gift,—when the new arms were shown him, wrote the following four lines:—

"These arms, so long interr'd from human sight,
Beneath the image bland of Holy Cross,
Renew their glorious ensigns' proud emboss,
And wait but Peter's sacred mantle bright."

This epigram was read throughout the whole of Florence. A few days after died Pope Julius the Second, and the Cardinal de' Medici, afterwards known as the magnanimous and liberal Leo X., having repaired to Rome, was elected Pope, contrary to the general opinion: my father, having sent him the four verses which contained so happy an augury, was invited by him to repair to that capital, which would have been greatly to his advantage, but he did not choose to leave Florence. However, instead of being rewarded, his place at court was taken from him by Jacopo Salviati, as soon as that nobleman was made gonfalonier.

This was the reason of my applying myself to the goldsmith's business; and while I was learning that trade I was compelled to spend part of my time in practising upon the flute, much against my inclination. For when my father spoke to me in the manner above mentioned, I requested him to let me draw so many hours a-day, telling him that I would dedicate the remainder of it to the flute; upon which he said to me, "Do you not take pleasure in playing on that instrument?" I answered in the negative, saying, the profession of a musician appeared to me base in comparison of that to which I aspired. My poor father then, in the utmost despair, placed me with the father of the cavalier Bandinello, who was called Michelagnolo, goldsmith of Pinzi di Monte, a man of great skill in his art. He was not descended from any illustrious race, but

was the son of a collier. This I do not mention as a reflection on Bandinello, who, as the founder of a distinguished family, is entitled to respect, provided his success was merited; and however that may be, I have nothing to say against him. When I had stayed there a few days, my father took me away from Michelagnolo, as being unable to bear me any longer out of his sight; so that I continued, much against my will, to play upon the flute till the age of fifteen. If I should attempt to relate the extraordinary events that befel me till that period, and the great danger to which my life was exposed, I should strike my readers with surprise and astonishment; but to avoid prolixity, having more interesting matter, I shall wholly omit them.

Having attained the age of fifteen, I engaged myself, against my father's inclination, with a goldsmith, named Antonio di Sandro, who was commonly called Marcone. This was an excellent artist, and a very worthy man, high-spirited, and generous in every respect. My father would not have him allow me any wages, as was customary with other workmen; for this reason, that, since I voluntarily applied myself to this art, I might likewise have an opportunity to draw whenever I thought proper. To this arrangement I readily acceded, and my worthy master was much pleased with the bargain. He had an only, but illegitimate son, to whom he often directed his orders, on purpose to spare me. So great was my inclination to improve, that in a few months I rivalled the most skilful journeyman in the business, and began to reap some fruits from my labour. I continued, however, to play sometimes, through complaisance to my father, either upon the flute or the horn; and I constantly drew tears and deep sighs from him every time he heard me. From a feeling of filial piety, I often gave him that satisfaction, endeavouring to persuade him that it gave me also particular pleasure.

CHAPTER II

At this juncture an adventure happened to my brother, which was attended with very serious consequences to us both. He was two years younger than myself, of a warm temper and the most undaunted courage, qualities which fitted him for the military school of the illustrious Signor Giovanni de' Medici, father to Duke Cosmo, where he became an excellent soldier. One Sunday evening, being between the gates of St. Gallo and Pinti, he challenged a young man of twenty, though he was but fourteen himself, and behaved so gallantly, that, after wounding the youth dangerously, he was upon the point of either killing or disarming him. There was a great crowd present, and amongst others were many of the young man's relations: seeing their kinsman hard pressed, they took up stones and threw them at my brother's head, who immediately fell to the ground. I, who happened to be present, alone and unarmed, cried out to my brother, as loud as I could, to quit the place. But as soon as I saw him fall, I ran to him, took his sword, and standing as near him as possible, I confronted a great many swords and stones, till some valiant soldiers, who came from the gate of St. Gallo, saved me from the exasperated multitude. I carried my brother home for dead, who was with great difficulty brought to himself, and afterwards cured.

The Council of Eight condemned our adversaries to a few years' imprisonment, and banished me and my brother, for six months, to the distance of ten miles from the city. Thus we took leave of our poor father, who, having no money, gave us his blessing.

I repaired to Siena, in quest of an honest goldsmith, whose name was Francesco Castoro. I was well acquainted with him, as I had worked with him some time before at

my trade, when I had eloped, for some frivolous reason, from my father. Signor Castoro received me very kindly, and found me employ, offering me a house for the whole time I should reside at Siena. I accepted his offer, and brought my brother to the house, where I followed my business for several months with close application. My brother, too, had made some progress in the Latin language, but, being young, he was not equally capable of appreciating the excellence of moral beauty, and led rather a dissipated life.

Soon after this troublesome affair the Cardinal de' Medici, afterwards Pope Clement VII., was prevailed upon, by the entreaties of my father, to obtain permission for us to return to Florence. A pupil of my father's, excited by the natural malignity of his temper, desired the cardinal to send me to Bologna, in order to take lessons on the flute of a great master, whose name was Antonio. The cardinal told my father that if he would send me thither he would give me a letter of recommendation: the old gentleman was extremely desirous that I should go, and I was glad of that opportunity of seeing the world.

Upon my arrival at Bologna I undertook to work under a person whose name was Ercole del Piffero, and I began to make money. At the same time, I went every day to receive a lesson on the flute, and soon gained a considerable emolument by that odious profession; but I got much more by my trade as a goldsmith and jeweller. Having received no assistance from the cardinal, I went to lodge with a miniature-painter, named Scipio Cavalletti, who lived in the street of Our Lady of Baracani, and there I worked for a person named Grazia Dio, a Jew, with whom I earned a great deal of money.

Six months afterwards I returned to Florence, where Pierino the musician, who had been a pupil to my father, was greatly mortified at my success; but I, through complaisance of my aged parent, waited upon Pierino, and played both upon the horn and flute with a brother of his,

whose name was Girolamo. He was some years younger than Pierino, and was moreover a well-disposed young man, displaying a marked contrast to his brother. My father happening one day to be at the house of this Pierino to hear us play, and being highly pleased with my performance, said: "I am determined to make a great musician of him, in spite of those who would fain prevent such a genius from shining in the world." To this Pierino answered (and what he said was very true), "Your son Benvenuto will acquire more profit, as well as honour, by minding his business as a goldsmith, than by blowing the horn, or any other instrument." My father, finding I was of the same opinion, was incensed to the last degree; he therefore said to him in a violent passion: "I was very sensible that you were the person who thwarted me in my design; and it was you that were the cause of my being deprived of the place I held at court, behaving to me with that base ingratitude, which is but too frequently the return for the greatest favours. I got you promoted, and you were so base as to undermine me; but mark these words: in less than a few weeks you will rue this black ingratitude." Pierino replied: "Signor Giovanni Cellini, most men when they advance in years begin to dote: this is your case; nor am I surprised at it, as you have already lavished all your substance, without reflecting that your children were likely to want. Now I, for my part, propose taking quite a different course: I intend to leave so much to my sons, that they shall be able to assist yours." To this my father replied, "No bad tree ever brings forth good fruit, but the reverse; and I must tell you, that if you be a bad man, your sons will be fools and indigent, and come to beg of my children, who shall be crowned with affluence." At this they parted, murmuring and railing at each other.

I, who, as it was reasonable, took my worthy father's part, said to him at quitting the house, that I intended to revenge the affront he had received from that scoundrel,

if he would give me leave to dedicate my talents to the art of design. My father made answer: "Dear child, I have been myself, in my time, a master of that art; but will you not, in your turn, promise me, by way of recreation, after your noble labours are done, and for my sake, who am your father, who have begot you, educated you, and laid the foundation of so many shining qualifications, sometimes to take in hand your flute and cheerful horn, and play for your pastime and amusement?" I made answer, that I would readily comply with his desire. My good father then rejoined, that the virtues which I displayed to the world would be the best revenge I could take for the affronts and abusive language he had received from his enemies.

Before the month was expired, it happened that the above-mentioned Pierino, causing a vault to be made to a house he had in the street *dello Studio*, and being one day in a room on the ground-floor over the vault, which was then repairing, entered into conversation with some company, and spoke of his master, who was no other than my father, repeating the prophetical words which the latter had uttered, concerning his approaching ruin. Scarcely had he ended his discourse, when the chamber in which he then stood suddenly sunk in, either because the vault had been unskilfully constructed, or through an effect of the divine vengeance, which, though late, is only deferred to a fitter season. Some of the stones and bricks falling with him broke both his legs, whilst the rest of the company, standing upon the extremities of the vault, received no manner of hurt, but remained in the utmost surprise and astonishment at what they saw; and most of all at what he had said to them a little before in a scoffing mood. My father, having heard of this accident, took his sword, and went to see him; and, in the presence of his father, whose name was Niccolajo da Volterra, trumpeter to the senate, addressed him in these words: "My dear pupil Pierino, I am very sorry for your mis-

fortune; but you may remember that it is but a short time since I apprised you of it; and my prophecy will likewise be verified with regard to our children."

Soon after, the ungrateful Pierino died of the consequences of his fall, and left behind him a wife of bad character, and a son, who, a few years after, came to me at Rome, asking charity. I gave him alms, as well because I am naturally of a charitable disposition, as because I could not without tears recollect the affluence with which Pierino was surrounded, when my father spoke the words above mentioned.

Continuing to apply closely to my business as a goldsmith, by the emoluments arising from thence I assisted my good father, as well as my brother Cecchino, whom he caused to be instructed in the Latin language; for, as he intended I should be the best player upon the flute in the world, it was his design that my younger brother should be a man of learning, and a profound lawyer. He was not, however, able to force nature, which gave me a turn to drawing, and made my brother, who had a fine person, entirely devote himself to the military profession. This brother of mine, having in his early youth learned the first rudiments of war under that renowned commander Giovanni de' Medici, returned to my father's house, at a time when I happened to be out of the way: being very much in want of clothes, he applied to my sister, who, unknown to my father, gave him a new surtout and cloak which belonged to me; for, besides assisting my father, and my sisters, who were virtuous and deserving girls, I had, by the profits arising from my extraordinary application, contrived to purchase this handsome apparel. Finding my clothes gone, and my brother disappeared, I said to my father: "How could you suffer me to be wronged in such a manner, when you see I spare no toil nor trouble to assist the family?" He made answer, "That I was his good and worthy son, but that what I thought a loss, I should find to be true

gain;" adding "that it was a duty incumbent on us, and the command of God Himself, that he who had property should share it with him who had none; and that, if I would for his sake patiently bear the wrong I had suffered, God would increase my store, and pour down blessings upon me."

I behaved to my poor afflicted father like an inexperienced young man; and, taking with me what little money and clothes I had left, I bent my course towards one of the city gates, and, not knowing which of them led to Rome, I travelled to Lucca, and from thence to Pisa. I was now about sixteen years of age. Upon my arrival in the last-mentioned city, I stopped near the middle bridge, hard by the fish-market, at a goldsmith's shop, and looked attentively at the master whilst he was at work. He asked me my name, and what business I followed: I made answer, that I worked a little in the same branch that he did. The man thereupon bade me come in, and setting before me some tools to work with, he told me that my physiognomy induced him to believe that I was an honest youth; so saying, he laid before me gold, silver, and jewels, and, after I had finished my first day's task, he carried me to his house, where he lived very respectably with his wife and children.

I then called to mind the grief which my father must feel upon my account, and wrote him word that I was at the house of a very worthy tradesman, one Signor Ulivieri della Chiostra; and that, under him, I was employed in my profession on many great and beautiful works. I therefore desired him to make himself easy, as I was improving in my business, and hoped soon to procure him both profit and honour by my skill. He immediately wrote me an answer, the purport of which was as follows: "My dear son, so great is the love I bear to you, that I should instantly set out for the place where you now reside, were it not that the laws of honour, which I always adhere to, prevent me; for I think myself deprived of the light of my eyes every day that

I am without seeing you, as I did formerly, when I gave you the best instructions. I shall keep it in view to incite my family to virtuous enterprise, and pray lead the way in the attainment of good qualities, for which all I wish is that you would keep in mind those few simple words;—observe, and never once allow them to escape your memory:—

'The man who consults his house's weal,
Lives honest—and lives to work—not steal.'"

This letter fell into the hands of my master Ulivieri, who read it to himself, and then said to me: "Thy good looks, Benvenuto, did not deceive me, as I find by a letter from thy father, which has fallen into my hands. He must, doubtless, be a man of worth, therefore consider thyself as in thine own house, and under the care of thy father."

Whilst I stayed at Pisa I went to see the Campo Santo, where I discovered a great number of antiquities, such as large marble urns; and, in many parts of the town, I saw other monuments of antiquity, which afforded me constant amusement, whenever I was disengaged from the business of the shop. As my master came daily, with great good nature, to see me at the little apartment which he had assigned to my use, when he found that I spent all my time in laudable and virtuous occupations, he conceived as strong an affection for me as if he had been my father. I improved considerably, during a year's stay in that city, and executed several fine pieces of workmanship, which inspired me with an ardent desire to become more eminent in my profession. My father, at this juncture, wrote to me very affectionately to come home, and, in every letter, exhorted me not to neglect my flute, in which he had taken so much pains to instruct me. Upon this I entirely lost all inclination to return to him; and to such a degree did I hate that abominable flute, that I thought myself in a sort of paradise during my stay at Pisa, where I never once played upon that instrument.

At the expiration of the year, Signor Ulivieri happened to have occasion to go to Florence, to dispose of some filings of gold and silver; and, as I had in that unwholesome air caught a slight fever, I returned, whilst it was upon me, with my master to Florence; where my father secretly entreated my master, in the most urgent manner, not to carry me back again to Pisa. My fever still continuing, I kept my bed about two months, and my father attended me with the greatest affection imaginable; telling me repeatedly that he thought it a thousand years till I recovered, that he might hear me play upon the flute; but feeling my pulse, as he had a smattering of physic and some learning, he perceived so great a change in it whenever he mentioned the flute, that he was often frightened, and left me in tears. Observing then the great concern he was in, I bade one of my sisters bring me a flute; for, though I had a fever constantly upon me, the instrument was a very easy one, and would do me no hurt. I thereupon played with such skill and dexterity, that my father, entering the room on a sudden, gave me a thousand blessings, assuring me that, during my absence from him, I had made great improvement. He requested, moreover, that I would endeavour to continue my progress, and not neglect so admirable a qualification.

But no sooner had I recovered my health, than I returned to my worthy friend, the goldsmith Marcone, who put me in a way of making money; and with my gains I assisted my father and my relations.

CHAPTER III

About this time there came to Florence a sculptor named Pietro Torrigiani, who had just arrived from England, where he had resided several years; and as he was an intimate friend of my master's, he every day came to see

him. This artist, having seen my drawings and workmanship, said to me: "I am come to Florence to invite as many young artists as I can to England, and, having a great work in hand for the King of England, I should be glad of the assistance of my fellow-citizens of Florence. I perceive that your manner of working and your designs are rather those of a sculptor than a goldsmith; now I have considerable undertakings in bronze, so that, if you will go with me to England, I will at once make your fortune." This Torrigiani was a handsome man, of consummate assurance, having rather the air of a bravo than of a sculptor; above all, his fierce gestures and his sonorous voice, with a peculiar manner of knitting his brows, were enough to frighten every one that saw him; and he was continually talking of his valiant feats among those bears of Englishmen. His conversation one day happened to turn upon Michael Angelo Buonarroti; a drawing of mine, taken from one of the cartoons of that divine artist, gave rise to this discourse.

This cartoon was the first in which Michael Angelo displayed his extraordinary abilities, as he made this and another, which were to adorn the hall of the palace where the senators assembled, in emulation of Leonardo da Vinci: they represented the taking of Pisa by the Florentines. The admirable Leonardo had chosen for his subject a battle fought by cavalry, with the taking of certain standards, in which he acquitted himself with a force of genius that cannot be surpassed by conception. Michael Angelo Buonarroti, in his cartoon, exhibited a considerable body of foot, who were bathing in summer-time in the river Arno; at this very instant he represents an alarm of battle, and all the naked soldiers rushing to arms, with gestures so admirably expressive, that no ancient or modern performance was ever known to attain to so high a degree of perfection: and, as I have already observed, that of the great Leonardo was also a work of extraordinary beauty. These two cartoons stood, one of them in the palace of the

Medici, the other in the pope's hall. So long as they remained there, they were the school of the world; and though the divine Michael Angelo painted the great chapel of Pope Julius, he never again rose to that pitch of excellence: his genius could not reach the force of those first essays.

Let us now return to Pietro Torrigiani; who, holding the above-mentioned drawing of mine in his hand, spoke thus: "This Buonarroti and I went, when we were boys, to learn to draw at the chapel of Masaccio, in the church of the Carmelites; and it was customary with Buonarroti to rally all those who were learning to draw there. One day, a sarcasm of his having stung me to the quick, I was provoked to an uncommon degree, and gave him so violent a blow upon the nose with my fist, that I felt the bone and cartilage yield under my hand as if they had been made of paste, and the mark I then gave him he will carry to his grave." This speech raised in me such an aversion to the fellow, because I had seen the works of the divine Michael Angelo, that, far from having any inclination to go with him to England, I could never more bear the sight of him.

Whilst I was in Florence I did my utmost to learn the exquisite manner of Michael Angelo, and never once lost sight of it. About this time I contracted an intimate acquaintance and friendship with a youth of my own age, who, like me, was learning the goldsmith's business: his name was Francesco, son of Filippo, whose father was Frà Filippo, an excellent painter. Our intercourse gave rise to so great an affection between us, that we were never asunder; his house was full of the admirable performances of his father, which consisted of several books of drawings by his own hand representing the antiquities of Rome. I took great delight in these, and our acquaintance lasted about two years. At this time I produced a piece of basso-rilievo in silver, about as big as the hand of a little child; it served for the clasp of a man's belt; clasps of

that size being then in use. Upon it was carved a group of foliages, made in the antique taste, with several figures of youths, and other beautiful grotesques. This piece of work I made in the shop of a person named Francesco Salimbeni; and, upon its coming under the inspection of the goldsmiths' company, I acquired the reputation of the most expert young man in the trade.

At this time I was also acquainted with one Giovanni Battista, surnamed Tasso, who was a carver in wood, a youth of my own age exactly. He one day began to talk to me about going to Rome, observing that he should like to accompany me thither (this occurred as we sat conversing after dinner), and I having had a new difference with my father about learning the flute, said to Tasso: "You appear to be a man of words and not of deeds." Tasso answered: "I have had a dispute with my mother, and, if I had but money sufficient to bear my charges to Rome, I would never more trouble my head about my little hole of a shop." To this I replied, that if there was no other obstruction to our journey, I had money enough in my pocket to defray our expenses. Then chatting as we walked along, before we knew whereabout we were, we came to the gate of San Pier Gattolini; when I said to my companion: "My good friend Tasso, it is the direction of God that we should insensibly reach this gate: since I have proceeded so far, I think I have performed half the journey."

Matters being thus agreed, we said to each other, as we were jogging on: "What will the old folks at home say this evening?" We then came to a resolution to think no more of them, till we arrived at Rome: so we buckled on our knapsacks, and proceeded in silence to Siena. When we reached that city, Tasso said that he had hurt his feet, and did not choose to walk any farther, at the same time asking me to lend him money to return home. I answered that I should have none left to bear my expenses to Rome, and that he should have well weighed his project before he left

Florence; adding, that if the hurt he received prevented his accompanying me, we should find a return-horse for Rome, and then he would have no excuse. Thus having hired a horse, as I saw he did not answer me, I bent my course towards the gate that led to Rome. Perceiving that I was resolved, he came hopping after me as well as he could, at a distance, grumbling and muttering all the time. When I reached the gate I was touched with compassion for my companion, and having waited for his coming, took him up behind me, using these words: "What would our friends say of us, if, after having commenced a journey to Rome, we had not the courage to push any farther than Siena?" My friend Tasso acknowledged that my observation was just, and, as he was a person of a cheerful disposition, he began to laugh and sing, and in this merry mood we pursued our journey to Rome. I was then in the nineteenth year of my age, as I was born exactly in the year 1500.

As soon as we got to that capital, I went to work with a master whose name was Firenzuola of Lombardy, an excellent artist in making vases, and other things of a considerable size. Having shown him part of the model which I had made at Florence with Salimbeni, he was highly pleased with it, and spoke thus to a journeyman of his named Giannotto Giannotti, a native of Florence, that had lived with him several years: "This is one of the geniuses of Florence, and thou art one of its dunces." As I knew this Giannotto, I had a mind to have some chat with him. Before he set out for Rome, we often practised drawing in the same school, and had been for several years intimate acquaintances. He was, however, so much nettled at his master's speech, that he declared he was not acquainted with me, nor had ever seen me before. Provoked at his behaviour in this manner, I said to him: "Oh, Giannotto! formerly my intimate friend, when we were employed together in drawing, and when we ate and drank in such and such apartments of our native town, I do

not desire that you should bear testimony of my abilities to your master, for I hope, by my own hands, to show what I am, without your assistance." When I had done speaking, Firenzuola, who was a passionate man, turned to Giannotto, and said: "You vile scoundrel, are you not ashamed to behave in such a manner to one that was formerly your intimate acquaintance?" At the same time he addressed himself to me: "Come in, young man," said he, "and do as you proposed; let your own hands prove your abilities."

So saying, he set me upon a fine piece of work in silver, which was intended for a cardinal. This was a small casket, in imitation of that of porphyry, which stands before the door of the Rotunda. That which I made, I adorned with so many fine figures, that my master went about showing it everywhere, and making it his boast that his shop had produced so admirable a piece of art. It was about half a cubit in circumference, and made in such a manner as to hold a salt-cellar at table. This was the first time I earned money at Rome: part of it I sent to the relief of my good father, and the remainder I kept to support me whilst I studied the antiquities of that city, which I did till my money began to fail, and then I was obliged to return to the shop, and work for my subsistence. My fellow-traveller, Battista di Tasso, made but a short stay at Rome, and returned to Florence. For my part I undertook new commissions, and when I had finished them, I took it into my head to change my master, being enticed away by a Milanese, whose name was Signor Pagolo Arsago.

My first master Firenzuola had thereupon a great quarrel with this Arsago, and gave him some abusive language in my presence. I began to speak in defence of my new master; and told Firenzuola that "I was born free, and resolved to continue so; that he had no cause of complaint either against Arsago or me; that I had still some money left to receive from him, and that, as I was a free artificer,

I would go wherever I thought proper, not being conscious of injuring anybody thereby." At the same time Arsago made a great many apologies, affirming that he had never persuaded me to leave my master, and that I should oblige him by returning to Firenzuola. I replied, that "as I was not conscious of having wronged my master in any respect, and as I had finished all the work I had undertaken, I was resolved to be at my own disposal, and that he who had a mind to employ me, had nobody to consult but myself." Firenzuola made answer: "I will no longer solicit you, or give myself any trouble about you; and I desire you never more to appear in my presence." I then put him in mind of my money, but he only answered by scoffing and derision. I told him that as I used my tools well, as he was sensible I did, in my trade, I knew equally well how to use my sword in recovering my right. As I uttered these words an old signor named Antonio da S. Marino came up; he was one of the best goldsmiths in Rome, and had been Firenzuola's master: hearing what I had to say for myself, he immediately took my part, and desired Firenzuola to pay me. The dispute was very warm, for Firenzuola was still a better swordsman than a jeweller; however, justice and reason are not easily baffled, and I exerted myself to such purpose, that my demand was satisfied. Some time after Firenzuola and I were reconciled, and I stood godfather to a child of his, at his own request. Continuing to work with my new master Pagolo Arsago, I earned a great deal of money, and constantly sent the best part of my gains to my father.

At the expiration of two years, I returned to Florence at the request of my good father, and began to work again under Francesco Salimbeni, with whom I gained a genteel subsistence, taking great pains to become perfect in my profession. Having renewed my acquaintance with Francesco di Filippo, though that odious flute drew me into some pleasurable dissipation, I contrived to dedicate some hours, both of the night and the day, to

my studies. About this time I made a silver clasp girdle, such as were usually worn at that time by new-married ladies. It was three inches broad, and worked in half-rilievo, with some small round figures in it; this I made for a person of the name of Raffaello Rapaccini. Though I was very ill-paid for my trouble, the work did me so much honour, that the reputation I acquired by it was of more service to me than a fair pecuniary recompense.

Having at this time worked with several masters in Florence, amongst the different goldsmiths I knew in that city, I met with some persons of worth, as was Marcone, my first master; whilst others, who had the character of honest men, being envious of my works, and robbing and calumniating me, did me the greatest injustice. When I perceived this, I shook off my connections with them, and looked upon them all as unprincipled men, and little better than thieves. A goldsmith, amongst the rest, named Giovanni Battista Sogliani, was so complaisant as to lend me part of his shop, which stood at the side of the new market, hard by Landi's bank. There I executed many little works, earned a great deal of money, and was enabled to assist my relations materially. Envy began then to rankle in the hearts of my former bad masters, whose names were Salvadore and Michele Guasconti; they all three kept shops, and had immense business. Seeing that they did me ill offices with some men of worth, I complained of it, and said they ought to be satisfied with having robbed me, as they had done, under the mask of benevolence. This coming to their ears, they declared loudly that they would make me repent having uttered such words; but I, being a stranger to fear, little regarded their menaces.

As I happened one day to lean against the shop of one of these men, he called me to him, and in the most abusive language bullied and threatened me. Upon which I said, that if they had done their duty with

respect to me, I should have spoken of them as persons of fair character; but, as they had behaved in a different manner, they had only themselves to complain of. Whilst I spoke thus, one Gherardo Guasconti, a cousin of theirs, who was in all probability set on by them, took the opportunity, as a beast loaded with bricks happened to pass by, to push it so violently against me, that I was very much hurt. Upon which I instantly turned about, and seeing him laugh, gave him so violent a blow on the temple that he fell down, and lay upon the ground motionless and insensible. Then turning to his cousins, I said to them: "That is the way I use cowardly rascals like you;" and as they, confiding in their number, seemed preparing to take their revenge, I, in a violent passion, drew a little knife, and vented my anger in these words: "If any one of you offers to quit the shop, let another run for a confessor, as there will be no occasion for a surgeon." This declaration struck such terror into them all, that not one of them ventured to stir to the assistance of his cousin.

No sooner had I left the place, but both the fathers and sons ran to the magistrates, and told them that I had violently assaulted them with arms, in so audacious a manner, that the like had never been known in Florence. The Council of Eight summoned me, and I, without delay, presented myself before them. Here I met with a severe reprimand, as well in consequence of the appearance of my adversaries in long mantles and robes, whilst I wore only a cloak, as because they had taken care to prepossess them in their favour, a precaution which I, being inexperienced, and trusting to the goodness of my cause, had neglected. I told them, that "as I had received such provocation from Gherardo, and had only given him a slap on the face, I did not think I deserved so severe a rebuke." Prinzivalle della Stufa, who was one of that court, hardly suffering me to make an end of the words "slap on the face," exclaimed: "You gave him a violent blow with your fist,

and not a slap." The bell having rung, and we being all dismissed, Prinzivalle thus spoke in my favour to the rest of the bench: "Observe, gentlemen, the simplicity of this poor youth, who acknowledges himself to have given a slap on the face, thinking it to be a less offence than a violent blow; whereas there is a penalty of five-and-twenty crowns for giving a person a slap on the face, in the new market; while the penalty for a blow with the fist is little or nothing. This is a very worthy young man, who supports his poor relations by his industry: would to God that there were many like him in our city, which can, indeed, boast but a very small number of virtuous citizens."

There were in the court some persons in folded caps, who, moved by the importunities and misrepresentations of my adversaries, because they were of the faction of Frà Girolamo, were for having me sent to prison, and heavily fined: but the good Prinzivalle defeated their malice, by getting me fined only in four bushels of meal, which were to be given in charity to the monastery *delle Murate.* This same judge, having called me into his presence, commanded me not to say a single word, but obey the orders of the court, upon pain of incurring their displeasure. They sent us then to the chancellor, and I muttered the words "slap, and not a blow, on the face;" the magistrates burst out a-laughing. The chancellor commanded us all to give security to each other for our good behaviour, and sentenced me only to pay the four measures of meal. I thought myself very hardly used, and having sent for a cousin of mine, whose name was Annibale Librodoro, father to Signor Librodoro, the surgeon, that he might be bail for me, he refused to appear. This incensed me to the highest degree, believing my case desperate, and I exclaimed loudly at his behaviour, as he was under great obligations to my family. Here it may be observed how a man's stars not only incline, but actually compel, him to do their behest.

Inflamed by this treatment, swelling like an enraged asp,

and being naturally of a very passionate temper, I waited till the court broke up, and the magistrates were gone to dinner. Finding myself then alone, and that I was no longer observed by any of the officers of the court, I left the place in a violent fury, and went in all haste to my workshop, where I took up a dagger, and ran to attack my adversaries, who by that time were come home. I found them at table, and young Gherardo, who had been the chief cause of the quarrel, immediately flew at me. I thereupon gave him a stab in the breast, which pierced through his cloak and doublet, without once reaching his skin, or doing him any sort of harm. Imagining, however, from the rustling of his clothes, upon my giving the stab, and from his falling flat upon the ground, through fright and astonishment, that I had done him some great hurt, I cried out: "Traitors, this day I shall be revenged on you all." The father, mother, and sisters, thinking that the day of judgment was come, fell prostrate upon their knees, and, with voices full of terror and consternation, implored for mercy. Seeing then that none of my adversaries stood upon the defensive, and that Gherardo lay stretched out upon the ground like a dead corpse, I scorned to meddle with them, but ran downstairs like a madman. When I got into the street, I found the rest of the family, who were about a dozen in number, ready to attack me. One of them held a ball of iron, another a thick iron tube, another a hammer taken from an anvil, and others again had cudgels in their hands. Rushing amongst them like a mad bull, I threw down four or five and fell to the ground along with them, now aiming my dagger at one, now at another. Those who continued standing exerted themselves to the utmost, belabouring me with their hammers and cudgels; but, as God sometimes mercifully interposes upon such occasions, it so happened that I neither received nor did any harm. I lost nothing but my cap, which fell into the hands of some of my adversaries who at first had fled: being assured it was only my

cap, each of them struck it with his weapon; but, upon looking about for the wounded and slain, it appeared that none of them had sustained any injury.

The scuffle being over, I bent my course towards the convent of Santa Maria Novella, and accidentally met with a friar named Alessio Strozzi. Though I was not acquainted with the good father, I entreated him to save my life, saying, I had been guilty of a serious offence. The friar desired me not to be under any apprehensions, for that whatever crimes I might have committed I should be in perfect security in his cell. In about an hour's time, the magistrates having assembled in an extraordinary meeting, published one of the most tremendous edicts that ever was heard of, threatening the severest penalties to whosoever should grant me an asylum, or be privy to my concealment, without any distinction of place or quality of the person that harboured me.

My poor afflicted father, appearing before the eight judges, fell prostrate upon the ground, and begged them to show compassion on his young and unfortunate son. Thereupon one of those incensed magistrates, shaking the top of his venerable hood, stood up, and thus angrily expressed himself: "Rise directly, and quit this spot, or, to-morrow morning, we shall send you from the town under a guard!" My father, in answer to these menaces, said: "You will do what God permits you, and nothing more." The magistrate replied that nothing could be more certain than that God had thus ordered matters. My father then said boldly to him: "My comfort is that you are a stranger to the decrees of Providence."

Having thus quitted the court, he came to me with a youth about my age, whose name was Piero, son of Giovanni Landi (we were dearer to each other than brothers); this young man had under his mantle an excellent sword and a coat of mail. My father having acquainted me with the situation of affairs, and what the magistrates had said, embraced me most tenderly, and gave me his

blessing, saying, "May the protection of God be with you!" Then presenting me with the sword, and the coat of mail, he, with his own hands, helped to accoutre me, concluding with these words, "My worthy son, with these arms you must either live or die." Pier Landi, who was present, wept without ceasing, and brought me ten crowns of gold. I desired him to pull off a few hairs from my cheeks, which were the first down that overspread them. Father Alessio dressed me in the habit of a friar, and gave me a lay brother for a companion.

I came out of the convent by the Al Prato gate, and walked by the side of the town walls, as far as the great square, ascending the steep of Montui, where I found, in one of the first houses, a person of the name of Grassuccio, natural brother to Benedetto da Monte Varchi. After I had laid aside my friar's disguise, and resumed my former appearance, we mounted two horses, which there stood ready for us, and galloped away in the night to Siena.

Grassuccio, upon his return to Florence, waited on my father, and informed him of my having reached a place of safety. My father, highly rejoiced at these tidings, was impatient to see the magistrate who, the day before, had rebuked him with such severity. As soon as he came into his presence, he said: "You see at last, Antonio, it was God, not you, that knew what was to befall my son." To which the other answered: "I wish I could see him once more before this court." My father replied: "I return thanks to God that He has rescued him out of your hands."

In the meantime I was waiting at Siena for the Roman Procaccio, or mail, with which I travelled on the rest of my journey; and when we had passed the Paglia, we met with the courier, who brought intelligence of the election of Pope Clement VII.

CHAPTER IV

Upon my arrival at Rome I went to work at the shop formerly of Santi the goldsmith; who being dead, his son continued to carry on the business. The latter did not work himself, but employed a young man, whose name was Lucagnolo da Jesi, whom Signor Santi had taken into his service when a little country lad: he was low in stature, but very well proportioned. This youth was more expert than any journeyman I had ever seen before, possessing great facility and freedom of design; he worked only on a large scale, making beautiful vases, basins, and other things of the same kind. Having engaged to work in this shop, I began to make some chandeliers for the Bishop of Salamanca, a Spaniard; these were wrought with as much art as it was possible to bestow upon a work of that nature. A pupil of Raffaello da Urbino, one Giovanni Francesco, surnamed *il Fattore*, who was an excellent painter, and intimate with the bishop, found means to introduce me to his favour, insomuch that he frequently employed me, and I gained considerably by my business.

About this same period I sometimes went to draw at the chapel of Michael Angelo, and sometimes at the house of Agostino Chigi of Siena, in which were several admirable paintings by that great master, Raffaello da Urbino; this was only upon holidays, because Signor Gismondo, brother to the said Signor Agostino, was come to live there. The family, however, were greatly pleased when they saw young artists frequenting their house, as a school of painting. The wife of the said Signor Gismondo, a most elegant and beautiful lady, having often seen me thus employed under her roof, one day came to look at my drawings, and asked me whether I was a painter or a sculptor: I told her I was a gold-

smith. She replied that I drew too well for a goldsmith; and having ordered her waiting-maid to bring her a jewel consisting of some very fine diamonds set in gold, she desired me to tell their value. I estimated them at eight hundred crowns. The lady declared that I had judged very rightly, and then asked whether I would undertake to set them properly; I answered that I would do it most willingly; and began the design in her presence, in which I was the more successful on account of the pleasure I took in conversing with so fair and agreeable a lady. When I had finished my sketch, another most beautiful Roman lady came downstairs into the room, and asked Porzia (which was the first lady's name) what she was about; to which the latter answered, smiling, "I am amusing myself in seeing this young man draw, who is as good as he is handsome." Though I had acquired some assurance, I yet retained a mixture of bashfulness with it; I coloured deeply, and said: "Let me be what I may, madam, I shall always be most ready to serve you." The lady, reddening a little herself, replied: "You know I am desirous of your services." She then bade me take the diamonds home with me, and gave me twenty gold crowns, saying, "Set these diamonds according to the design which you have drawn, and preserve me the old gold in which they are mounted." The other lady then said: "If I were the young man I would go off with what I had got." Signora Porzia rejoined: "That virtues are seldom coupled with vices, and that, were I to behave in that manner, I should belie my honest open countenance;" then taking the other lady by the hand she turned about, and said to me with a smile of condescension, "Farewell, Benvenuto."

I stayed some time after I had drawn the design, copying a figure of Jove, the work of Raffaello da Urbino. As soon as I had finished it, I went away, and set about making a little model in wax, to show in what manner the work was afterwards to be executed. This I carried to

Signora Porzia, with whom I found the Roman lady: they were both highly pleased with my specimen, and encouraged me by such obliging compliments, that I collected sufficient confidence to promise them that the work itself should be far superior to the model. I thereupon began my task, and in twelve days set the jewels in the form of a fleur-de-lys, as I said above, adorning it with little masks, figures of boys and animals, and the finest enamel, so that the diamonds of which the fleur-de-lys was composed appeared with redoubled lustre.

Whilst I was engaged on this work, the worthy Lucagnolo seemed much dissatisfied, frequently telling me that it would be more for my interest, as well as reputation, to help him in working on pieces of plate, as I had done at first. I made answer, that I could always obtain that kind of employment, but that such commissions as that in which I was occupied did not occur every day; and that they were no less reputable, and far more profitable, than large silver vessels. Upon my telling Lucagnolo that they were more lucrative, he laughed at me, and said: "You'll see that, Benvenuto; for by the time that you have completed your job I shall contrive to finish this piece of plate, which I began precisely at the same time when you undertook the setting of the jewels; and experience will convince you of the difference between the profit accruing to me from my piece of plate, and to you for your trinkets." I answered, that I would with pleasure make such a trial of skill with so consummate an artist, that it might appear which of us was mistaken, when both our performances were finished.

Thus, with countenances that betokened some displeasure, we both fell hard to work, eager to finish our several undertakings; and we laboured so industriously, that in about ten days' time we had both of us completed our respective tasks, in an elegant and workmanlike style. That of Lucagnolo was a large silver vase, which was to be placed on the table of Pope Clement, and to receive bones

and the rinds of various fruits whilst that pontiff was at his meals,—a work rather calculated for magnificence and ostentation than any real use. This piece of plate was adorned with two beautiful handles, as likewise with many masks of different sizes, and several fine foliages of the most beautiful and ingenious design that could possibly be conceived. Upon seeing this performance, I told Lucagnolo that it was the finest piece of plate I had ever beheld. Lucagnolo, thinking he had convinced me of my error, answered: "Your work appears to me equally admirable; but we shall soon see the difference between them." He then carried his piece of plate to the pope, who was highly satisfied, and immediately caused him to be paid the ordinary price for works of that kind.

In the meantime I took my performance to Signora Porzia, who expressed great surprise at my having finished it so expeditiously, and told me that I had far exceeded my promise to her. She then desired me to ask whatever I thought proper in recompense for my labour, declaring that, were she to make me lord of a castle, she should hardly think she had rewarded me in proportion to my deserts; but since that surpassed her ability, she desired me, with a smile, to ask something in her power to bestow. I answered that the most valued recompense which could crown my endeavours, was the satisfaction of having pleased her ladyship. This I said in a cheerful way; and, having made my bow, was departing, assuring her that I desired no other payment. Upon this, Signora Porzia, turning to the other lady, said: "You see the virtues we discovered in him are accompanied by others, and not by vices;" and they both expressed equal admiration. Signora Porzia then said to me: "My good Benvenuto, did you never hear it said, that when the poor give to the rich, the devil laughs?" I replied, that since he had met with so many vexations, I had a mind he should laugh for once. But as I was going away, she said she did not intend to favour him so much this time.

Upon my return to the shop, Lucagnolo, who had the money he received from the pope wrapped up in a paper, said to me: "Now compare the payment I have received for my piece of plate, with what you have had for your jewels." I answered that we might let the matter rest for that time, but I hoped the day following to make it appear that, as my work was in its kind as exquisite as his, I should be rewarded with equal munificence. The next day Signora Porzia, having sent her steward to the shop, he called me out, and put into my hands a paper bag of money, which he brought from that lady, telling me, at the same time, it was not his mistress's intention that the devil should laugh at my expense; and that the money she sent me was by no means a reward adequate to my merit, with several other compliments worthy of such a lady.

Lucagnolo, who thought it an age till he could compare his money to mine, that instant rushed into the shop; and in the presence of twelve workmen, and other neighbours, who were come to see how the contest would end, took his paper, laughing, with an air of triumph; then having pretended to make three or four efforts, he at last poured out the cash, which rattled loudly upon the counter; it amounted to the sum of five-and-twenty crowns in silver. I, who was quite stunned and disconcerted with his noise, and with the laughter and scoffs of the bystanders, having just peeped into my paper, and seeing it was filled with gold, without any emotion or bustle, held my paper bag up in the air, as I stood on one side of the counter, and emptied it as a miller does a sack. My coin was double the number of his, so that all the spectators, who before had their eyes fixed upon me with a scornful air, suddenly turned about to him, and said: "Lucagnolo, Benvenuto's pieces, being all gold, and twice as many as yours, make the grandest appearance of the two." Such an effect had envy, and the scorn shown by all present upon Lucagnolo, that I thought he would have dropped down dead; and

though he was to receive a third part of the money, as I was only a journeyman, and he my master, envy prevailed in him over avarice, which one would have expected to have been just the contrary, this Lucagnolo tracing his birth to a native of Jesi. He curst his art, and those from whom he had learnt it, declaring that from thenceforward he would renounce it, giving his whole mind to these toys, since they were so well paid for. Equally indignant on my part, I said that every bird considered its own note the sweetest; and that he talked like a rude uncultivated fellow in keeping with the Bœotian soil from which he had sprung. I then told him I would venture to prophesy that I should succeed in his branch of business but that he would never be successful in my gewgaws, as he called them. Thus I went off in a passion, telling him I would soon make it appear that I was no false prophet. Those who were present all declared him to be in the wrong, looking upon him as a mean fellow, which he was in fact; and upon me as a man of spirit, as I had shown myself.

The next day I went to return thanks to Signora Porzia, and told her that her ladyship had done the reverse of what she said she would; that I proposed to make the devil laugh, and that she had made him once more renounce God. We both were merry upon the occasion, and she gave me orders for other fine and valuable works.

About this time I contrived, by means of a pupil of Raffaello da Urbino, to get employed by the Bishop of Salamanca, in making one of those large silver vases for holding water, which are used in cupboards, and generally laid upon them by way of ornament. The bishop being desirous of having two of equal size, employed Lucagnolo to make one, and me another; but with regard to fashion, Giovanni Francesco, the painter, gave us a design, to which we were to conform. I with great alacrity set about this piece of plate; and a Milanese, whose name was Signor Giovanni Pietro della Tacca, accommodated me

with a part of his shop to follow my business. Having begun my work, I laid by what money I wanted for my own private use, and the remainder I sent to the relief of my poor father. At the very time the money was paid him in Florence, he happened to meet with one of those rigid magistrates, who had menaced and used him so roughly in consequence of my unfortunate scuffle. As this fiery magistrate had some very worthless sons, my father took an opportunity to say to him: "Untoward accidents may happen to anybody, especially to men of choleric tempers, when they know themselves to be injured; as was the case with my son, when he quarrelled with those jewellers: but it is evident from the general tenor of his life that I knew how to give him a virtuous education. I pray God your sons may behave to you neither better nor worse than mine has to me; and that I wish for your sake; for as God enabled me to give them a virtuous education, so when my aid was unavailing, He interposed Himself and found means to rescue them out of your violent hands." After he had left the magistrate, he wrote me an account of the whole affair, requesting me to play sometimes upon the flute, that I might not lose that admirable art, which he had taken so much pains to teach me. I now found myself strongly inclined to oblige him in this respect before he died: thus God often grants us those blessings which we pray for with faithful hearts.

Whilst I was going on with the Bishop of Salamanca's plate, I had no assistance but that of a little boy, whom, at the earnest request of his relations, I had, half against my will, taken as an apprentice. This boy, named Paulino, then about fourteen, was son to a citizen of Rome, who lived upon his fortune. Paulino was one of the best-bred, sweetest-tempered, and prettiest boys that I ever saw in my life; and on account of his good qualities, his extraordinary beauty, and the great love he bore me, I conceived the strongest affection for him that the human breast can conceive.

One of the effects of this great fondness was, that, in order to diffuse a ray of cheerfulness over his features, which had naturally a serious, melancholy cast, I from time to time took in my hand my flute: he used then to smile in so graceful and affecting a manner, that I am not the least surprised at the fables which the Greeks have written concerning their deities. Had my apprentice lived in that age, he would, in all probability, have turned the heads of some of the poets of antiquity. Paulino had a sister named Faustina, of so exquisite a form, that she might justly be compared to the renowned Faustina, whose charms are so much vaunted by historians; and as he sometimes carried me with him to his father's, so far as I could judge from observation, that worthy man seemed desirous that I should be his son-in-law. This made me set a much higher value upon music than I had done before. It happened about this time that Giovanni Giacomo, a musician of Cesena, who belonged to the pope's household, and was an excellent performer, sent Lorenzo Trombone, of Lucca, a person who is now in the service of our duke, to propose to me to assist them with my flute at the pope's Ferragosto, in playing some concert music; as he had selected some of the most beautiful compositions for the occasion. Though I had an earnest desire to finish the fine piece of plate that I had begun, yet as music has a secret charm in it, and as I was in some measure desirous of gratifying my aged father, I agreed to make one at their concert; so that for eight days before the Ferragosto we every two hours had a rehearsal.

Upon the first of August we repaired to Belvedere, and, whilst Pope Clement was at dinner, we played those fine compositions which we had long practised, insomuch that his Holiness declared he had never been delighted with more exquisite harmony: then sending for Giovanni Giacomo, he inquired of him how he had procured so able a master of the flute, and ordered him to give a full and

circumstantial account of my person. Upon Giovanni Giacomo's mentioning my name, the pope said: "Is he the son of Giovanni Cellini?" Finding who I was, he added that he would take me into his service, and make me one of his band of music. Giacomo answered: "As to his joining your Holiness's band, I will believe it when I see it: his business is that of a goldsmith and jeweller, in which he is a complete master, and, by working at it constantly, he makes a great deal more money than he could ever gain by music." The pope replied: "I am, therefore, the more desirous of having him in my service, since he is possessed of one talent more than I expected. Let him have the same salary with the rest of you, and tell him from me that I desire he would become one of my band, and I will find him constant employment in his other business." His Holiness thereupon gave him a handkerchief, which contained a hundred gold crowns, desiring him to divide them amongst the band, and let me have my share. Giacomo having quitted the pope, came to us and repeated word for word all that his Holiness had said. Having then divided the money amongst eight of us musicians, and given me what fell to my share, he added: "I have orders to set you down as one of our band." To this I made answer: "Give me a day to consider of it, and to-morrow I will let you know my determination."

When I had left them, I deliberated within myself whether I should accept the offer, as it was likely to interrupt me so much in the noble study of my own art. The night following, my father appeared to me in a dream, and entreated me, with tears of affection, that I would for his sake accept of the place of musician to the pope; I thought I replied that it was my firm resolution to do no such thing. He then appeared to me to assume a form so horrible that I was shocked to behold him, and he said: "If you do not, you will have your father's curse; but if you conform to my desire, I will bless you for ever." No

sooner was I awake than I ran in a fright to get my name entered amongst the Pope's musicians. I then wrote to my aged father, telling him what I had done; who, upon receiving the intelligence, was, through excess of joy, attacked by a disorder, which brought him almost to death's door. Immediately upon his recovery he wrote me word that he had had exactly the same dream as mine: I therefore concluded that I had given my father full satisfaction, and that all things would succeed to my wishes. I then exerted myself to the utmost to finish the piece of plate which I had begun for the Bishop of Salamanca.

This prelate was an extraordinary person, and exceedingly rich, but very difficult to please. He sent every day to inquire how I went on; and as the messenger happened once not to find me at work, his master came in a great passion, and said he would take the work out of my hands, and give it to another to finish. This came of my attaching myself to that odious flute. I therefore continued the work day and night with the most assiduous application, till I had forwarded it to such a degree that I thought I might venture to show it to the bishop; but upon seeing what I had done, he grew so impatient to have it completed that I heartily repented having ever shown it to him. In about three months I finished this grand piece of plate, which I adorned with a surprising variety of beautiful animals, foliages, and figures. I then sent my apprentice Paulino to show it to the ingenious Lucagnolo. Paulino delivered his message in the most graceful manner imaginable, in these terms: "Signor Lucagnolo, my master Benvenuto has, in pursuance of his promise, sent me to show you a piece of work which he has made in imitation of your performances, and he expects in return to see some of your little nick-nacks." These words being uttered, Lucagnolo took the piece of plate into his hand, and having examined it sufficiently, said to Paulino: "My pretty youth, tell thy master that he is an excellent

artist, and that there is nothing I desire more than his friendship." The lad joyfully delivered his message.

The plate was then carried to the bishop, who wanted to have a price set upon it. Just at this juncture Lucagnolo entered the room, who spoke of my work so honourably, and praised it to such a degree, that he even surpassed my own good opinion of it. The bishop having taken the plate into his hands, said, like a true Spaniard: "By G— I will be as slow in paying him as he was in finishing the work." When I heard this I was highly mortified, and cursed Spain and all who belonged to it.

Amongst other beautiful ornaments there was a handle to this silver vase of the most exquisite workmanship, which by means of a kind of spring stood exactly upon the mouth of it. The bishop one day ostentatiously exhibiting this piece of plate to some Spanish gentlemen of his acquaintance, it happened that one of them meddling indiscreetly with the handle, the delicate spring, ill-adapted to bear his rough touch, suddenly broke; and this occurred after his lordship had left the room. The gentleman thinking this a most unlucky accident, entreated the person who took care of the cupboard to carry the vase directly to the artist who had made it, and order him to mend it without delay, promising that he should be paid his own price, in case he proved expeditious. The piece of plate being thus again come into my hands, I promised to mend it without loss of time; and this promise I performed, for it was brought me before dinner, and I finished it by ten o'clock at night. The person that left it with me then came in a most violent hurry, for my lord bishop had called for it again, to show it to other gentlemen. The messenger, not giving me time to utter a word, cried: "Quick, quick, bring the plate in all haste." Being determined to take my own time, and not to let him have it, I said I did not choose to make such despatch. The man then flew into a passion, and clapping his hand to his sword, seemed to be ready to break into the shop by main

force; but this I prevented by dint of arms and menacing expressions. "I will not let you have it," said I: "go tell your master that it shall not be taken out of my shop till I am paid for my trouble." Seeing he could not obtain it by bullying, he began to beg and pray in the most suppliant manner; saying, that if I would put it into his hands, he would take care to see me satisfied. These words did not in the least shake my resolution; and as I persisted in the same answer, he at last despaired of success, and swearing that he would return with a body of Spaniards and cut me to pieces, thought proper to depart. In the meantime I, who gave some credit to what I had heard of Spanish assassinations, resolved that I would defend myself courageously; and having put in order an excellent fowling-piece, I said in my own mind: "He that takes both my property and my labour, may as well deprive me of life."

Whilst I thus argued with myself, a crowd of Spaniards made their appearance with the above-mentioned domestic at their head, who with great arrogance bade them break open the shop and thrash me. At these words I showed them the muzzle of my loaded fusil, and cried out with a loud voice: "Miscreants! traitors! cut-throats! are the houses and shops of citizens of Rome to be assaulted in this manner? If any thief amongst you offers to approach this door I will shoot him dead." Then taking aim at the domestic, and pretending that I was going to fire at him, I cried out: "As for you, you rascal, that set them on, you are the very first I shall make an example of." Upon hearing this he clapped spurs to a jennet, upon which he was mounted, and fled at full speed. The disturbance had now brought all the neighbours out of their houses, when some Roman gentlemen passing by said: "Kill the dogs, and we will stand by you." These words had such an effect on the Spaniards that they left me in a terrible panic, and told his lordship all that had happened.

The bishop, a proud, haughty man, reprimanded and

scolded his servants very severely, both because they had commenced such an act of violence, and because they had not gone through with it. The painter who had been present at the above-mentioned accident, entering at this juncture, his lordship desired him to go and tell me, that if I did not bring him the piece of plate directly, he would leave no part of my body entire but my ears, but that if I brought it without delay he would instantly satisfy my demand. The proud prelate's menaces did not in the least terrify me, and I sent him word that I should immediately lay the whole affair before the pope.

In the meantime his anger and my fear having subsided, and some gentlemen of Rome assuring me that I should come to no harm, and should be paid for my trouble, I repaired armed with my dagger and coat of mail, to the house of the bishop, who had caused all his servants to be drawn up in a line. There I made my appearance, Paulino following close behind me with the piece of plate. To make my way through the line of domestics was like passing through the Zodiac; one of them looked like a lion, another like a scorpion, and a third like a crab, till at last we came into the presence of this reverend prelate, who uttered the most dreadful oaths and Spaniard-like words that I ever heard. All this time I never once looked at him, or so much as answered a single word; at which his lordship seemed to discover more resentment than ever, and having ordered pen, ink, and paper, desired me to write him a receipt. I then looked him full in the face, and told him that I would readily do so, after I had received my money. The haughty bishop was then more exasperated than ever; but in fine, after a great deal of scolding and hectoring, I was paid, and afterwards, having written an acquittance, left the place in high spirits.

Pope Clement afterwards heard the whole affair, having first seen the piece of plate in question, though it was not shown him by me. He was highly pleased at what had happened, and said publicly that he entirely approved

of my behaviour, so that the bishop heartily repented what he had done; and, in order to make atonement for the past, sent me word by the same painter, that he intended to employ me in many commissions of importance; to which I made answer, that I was very willing to undertake them, but that I should insist upon being paid beforehand. These words coming likewise to the ear of Pope Clement made him laugh heartily. Cardinal Cibo was at Rome when the affair happened; and his Holiness told him the whole story of the difference between me and the Bishop of Salamanca, with all the disturbances it had given rise to; upon which he turned to one of his domestics, and bade him find constant employment for me in my business as a goldsmith. The above cardinal sent for me, and after much conversation ordered me to make him a piece of plate, more considerable than that which I had lately finished for the Bishop of Salamanca. I likewise worked for Cardinal Cornaro, and for many other cardinals, especially Ridolfi and Salviati: I was employed by them all, and earned a great deal of money. Signora Porzia Chigi recommended me to open a shop entirely upon my own account. I did so accordingly, and was kept in constant employment by that good lady, so that it was perhaps by her means chiefly that I came to make some figure in the world.

At this time I contracted an intimate acquaintance with Signor Gabriello Cesarini, gonfalonier of Rome, and was frequently employed by that gentleman. Amongst other works which I executed for him, one was particularly remarkable, namely, a large gold medal to be worn upon a hat, and on which was engraved Leda with her swan. He was highly pleased with the execution, and said he would get my work examined, in order to pay me according to its full value. My medal being a masterpiece of art, the connoisseurs set a much higher price upon it than he expected; he kept the medal, and I reaped no benefit from my labour. The same circumstance, however, hap-

pened respecting this medal, as in the case of the Bishop of Salamanca's piece of plate; but that narratives of this sort may not interfere with matters of much greater importance, I shall content myself with having barely touched upon this adventure.

CHAPTER V

As I am sometimes obliged to quit the sphere of my profession, in writing the history of my life, I find it expedient, with regard to such articles as the last mentioned, not to give a circumstantial account of them, but a summary of the chief particulars.

I happened once, at our feast of Saint John, to dine with several of my countrymen of different callings—painters, sculptors, and goldsmiths; where, amongst other artists of distinguished reputation, were present one Rosso, a painter, Giovanni Francesco, a pupil of Raffaello da Urbino, and many more. As I had invited them without any ceremony or constraint, they laughed and jested, as is usual with mixed companies, and made merry upon occasion of so great a festival. In the meantime a swaggering, bullying youth, a soldier of Signor Renzo da Ceri, happening to pass by, thought proper to ridicule the Florentines, and to cast many injurious reflections upon the whole body of the nation. As it was I who had invited all these men of genius and worth to this meeting, I considered myself as the person chiefly insulted; and therefore, unnoticed by any of the company, I went quietly up to the gentleman, who was in company with a woman of the town, and continued his gibing to divert her. I asked him whether he was the audacious man that abused the Florentines; and he immediately replied, "I am that man." Scarcely had he uttered these words, when I gave him a slap on the face, saying, "And I am *this* man:"

we both instantly drew our swords in a violent rage. But we had hardly made three passes, when several of the bystanders interposed, most of them seeming to take my part rather than that of my opponent; perceiving from what they had heard and seen that I was in the right. The next day I received a written challenge from my adversary, which I accepted with great cheerfulness, declaring that I thought this an affair of much more urgent importance than the business of my art. I instantly went to consult an old man named Bevilacqua, who had the reputation of being the best swordsman in Italy, having fought above twenty duels, and always come off with honour: this worthy man was my particular friend. He had become acquainted with me through my professional transactions, and had even interposed in some warm disputes between me and other persons: he therefore said to me: "My good friend, Benvenuto, if you were to cope with Mars himself, I have not the least doubt but you would acquire honour; for though I have been acquainted with you so many years, I never knew you in the wrong in any quarrel." He consented, therefore, to be my second, and, having repaired to the place appointed, in arms, I came off with much credit, by my opponent's yielding, though there was no blood shed. I pass by the particulars of this affair, which might indeed be entertaining in their way; rather choosing to dwell upon the events that befell me in the pursuits of my art, which was my chief motive for taking pen in hand, and in recounting which I shall find sufficient employment.

Though I was excited by an honest emulation to produce a piece of work which might equal, or even surpass, those of that able artist, Lucagnolo, I did not, however, upon that account, quit my agreeable art of jewelling; and, by uniting the two, I acquired much more reputation and profit than I could have done by either singly; for, in both branches, I often accomplished things unknown to other artists.

There was, at this time, in Rome, a native of Perugia, of great abilities, named Lautizio; the only man that worked in his branch of the business, which was that of a seal-engraver. Every cardinal, at Rome, has a seal on which his title is engraved; it is made as large as the hand of a child twelve years old, and the title is embellished with a variety of figures. One of these seals, well executed, costs a hundred crowns and upwards. I could not help desiring to rival so eminent an artist, though this business widely differs from that of the jeweller and goldsmith; but Lautizio, who was master of the art of seal-making, seemed to be confined to that alone, and knew nothing of any other art. I therefore set about learning this business, and though I found it extremely difficult, was never wearied by any labour it cost me, but steadily pursued the objects of gain and improvement. There was likewise, in Rome, another eminent artist, a native of Milan, who went by the name of Caradosso. This man worked only in medals, engraved with a chisel, upon thin plates of metal, and many other materials: he made some Scripture pieces in mezzo-rilievo, and figures of Christ, a palm long, of thin plates of gold, and of such admirable workmanship that I looked upon him to be one of the greatest masters in this art that I had ever known; and I envied him more than any of the rest. There were likewise other masters there, who worked in medals engraved on steel; these are the true guides and models of those who desire to acquire perfection in coining money. I set about learning all these different branches with the greatest assiduity. Next to these came the most elegant art of enamelling, in which I never heard of more than one that excelled, and this was a Florentine, named Amerigo, with whom I was not acquainted. His performances were indeed admirable, and such as were never equalled in any part of the globe; nor could I, or any other man, ever boast of having seen a piece of workmanship of the kind, that made even a faint approach to their

excellence. The art of enamelling is extremely difficult on account of the fire, which is the last thing used in works of that nature, and often spoils and totally destroys them. Nevertheless, I attached myself likewise to it with the greatest ardour; and, though I found it very hard to be acquired, such was the pleasure I took in learning it that its greatest difficulties appeared delightful to me. This was through the peculiar indulgence of the Author of nature, who had gifted me with a genius so happy that I could with the utmost ease learn anything I gave my mind to. These several branches are very different from each other; insomuch that the man who excels in one seldom or never attains to an equal degree of perfection in any of the rest; whereas I, having exerted myself with the utmost assiduity to be eminent in all these different arts, at last compassed my end, as I shall show in a proper place.

About this time, whilst I was still a young man, of three-and-twenty, so dreadful an epidemic disease prevailed in Rome that several thousands died every day. Somewhat terrified at this calamity, I began to indulge myself in certain recreations, as the fancy took me, and for a reason which I shall state. So on holidays I amused myself with visiting the antiquities of that city, and sometimes took their figures in wax; at other times I made drawings of them. As these antiquities are all ruinous edifices, where a number of pigeons build their nests, I had a mind to divert myself among them with my fowling-piece; but being greatly afraid of the plague, I avoided all commerce with the inhabitants, and made Paulino carry my gun. Thus we repaired together to the ruins, from whence I often returned home laden with pigeons of the largest size. But I never chose to put more than a single ball into my piece; and, in this manner, being a good marksman, I procured a considerable quantity of game. The fowling-piece, which I held in my hand, was both on the inside and outside as bright as a looking-glass. I likewise made the

powder as fine as the minutest dust; and, in the use of it, I discovered some of the most admirable secrets that ever were known till this time. Of this I will, to avoid prolixity, give only one proof, which will surprise even those who are adepts in this matter. When I had charged my piece with a quantity of powder, equal in weight to the fifth part of the ball, it carried two hundred paces point blank. In a word, so great was the delight I took in shooting, that it often diverted me from the business of my shop. Though it had this ill consequence, it in other respects procured me considerable advantages; for, by this exercise of shooting, I greatly improved my constitution: the air was of vast service to me. Whilst I was enjoying these pleasures, my spirits suddenly revived; I no longer had my usual gloom, and I worked to more purpose than when my attention was totally engrossed by business: upon the whole, my gun turned rather to my advantage than the contrary.

By means of this recreation also, I contracted an acquaintance with certain persons, who were accustomed to watch for the peasants of Lombardy, who, at a particular season of the year, came to work in the vineyards about Rome. These peasants, in digging the ground, frequently discovered ancient medals, agates, cornelians, emeralds, and cameos. They likewise found precious stones, such as sapphires, diamonds, and rubies. Those who went in quest of the peasants often bought such things of them for a trifle; and I, dealing with the former, have frequently given them gold crowns for curiosities, which had cost them only so many pence. This traffic, besides the great profit I derived from it, which was tenfold at least, procured me the friendship of most of the Roman cardinals. I shall mention only a few of the most remarkable of these rarities that happened to fall into my hands. One was a dolphin's head, about the size of a large bean. Though art was eminently conspicuous in this head, it was still surpassed by nature; for this emerald was of so fine a colour that

the person who purchased it of me for ten crowns caused it to be curiously set in a gold ring and sold it for a hundred. I had likewise one of the finest topazes that ever was beheld: art and nature seemed to rival each other in embellishing this stone, of the size of a large nut; and upon it was carved a remarkably fine head, intended to represent a Minerva. Also another stone, of a different sort from the latter: this was a cameo, upon which was engraved a Hercules, binding a triple-headed Cerberus. This was a piece of such extraordinary beauty, and such admirable workmanship, that our great Michael Angelo declared he had never beheld anything that surpassed it. Amongst a number of bronze medals, one fell into my hands, upon which was represented a head of Jupiter. This medal was the largest I ever beheld: the head was one of the most complete masterpieces of art. On the reverse were several other figures in a similar style. I might launch out into a long dissertation upon this subject, but I wish to avoid prolixity.

As I before said, the plague had prevailed for some time in Rome (for though I must go back a little way, I shall still pursue my subject), when there arrived in that city an eminent surgeon, named Signor Giacomo da Carpi. This extraordinary man, among other cures for which he was famous, undertook the most desperate cases in a certain disease. And as this was extremely prevalent at Rome among the priests, especially the more wealthy ecclesiastics, on being informed of the fact, he maintained that by means of certain perfumes he could effectually eradicate this pest. But he wished to bargain for his fees before he made his cures, and that not by tens, but by hundreds. He also understood the art of design extremely well. Happening one day to pass by my shop, he cast his eye upon some drawings, amongst which were several sketches of little fanciful vases, which I had drawn by way of amusement. These vases being, in form, very different from any that had ever been seen before, Signor Giacomo desired

me to make him some of silver, according to the same model: this I readily agreed to do, because they were of my own invention. Though he paid me generously for my trouble, the reputation which I acquired by them was of a hundred times more value to me than the profit; for all the goldsmiths declared they had never seen anything more complete, or better executed.

I had no sooner finished these pieces than my new employer showed them to the pope, and the day following quitted Rome. He was a man of great learning, and talked admirably upon medical subjects. The pope was desirous of having him in his service, but he declared he did not care to confine himself to any service whatever, and that whoever had occasion for his assistance, should send for him. He was a person of great sagacity, and did very wisely to leave Rome; for, not many months after, all his patients relapsed, so that he would have been murdered if he had stayed. He showed my little vases to the Duke of Ferrara and to several other princes; and told them that they were presents from a great nobleman at Rome, of whom he had demanded them, upon undertaking to cure him of a disorder; that the nobleman had told him they were antiques, and begged he would rather ask anything else, which he would freely part with, and leave him those; but he refused to cure him on any other terms, and thus got them into his possession.

This I was told by Signor Alberto Bendidio, at Ferrara, who, with great ceremony, showed me certain figures, at which I laughed, without making any remark. Signor Alberto, who was a proud, haughty man, said to me in a passion: "You may laugh as much as you please, but I must tell you that there has not been a man these thousand years able to make such figures." I, that I might not seem to detract from their reputation, stood apparently admiring them in silent astonishment. I was afterwards told in Rome, by many noblemen, some of whom were my friends, that these works appeared to them very extra-

ordinary, and of genuine antiquity. Encouraged by this declaration, I confessed that they were my performances. They not giving credit to what I said, I formed a resolution to make new designs, in order to prove my veracity, because the above-mentioned Signor Giacomo had carried off the others. By this work I made considerable gain. The epidemic disease continuing to rage for many months, I took to a freer course of life, because many of my acquaintance had died of it, while I had remained in perfect health. It happened one evening that a companion of mine brought to his house a courtesan, a Bolognese lady of extreme beauty. Her name was Faustina. She was about thirty years of age, and had with her a young servant-girl, some thirteen or fourteen years old. As I knew she was engaged by my friend, no temptation in the world would have induced me to act dishonourably. Still it was evident that she was not ill affected towards me; but finding me resolute in consulting my honour, she soon withdrew with her first lover, leaving, however, her pretty young attendant, as if to console me; a far more agreeable arrangement than if I had been favoured with the attentions of the mistress herself. Woe to us, however, had she divined the truth!

The ensuing day, about dinner time, I was seized with a severe headache, with extreme pain in my left arm, while a tremendous carbuncle broke out on the palm of my left hand. Terrified at the sight, my friend, the elder lady, and the younger girl, all disappeared together. Left alone, except with one of my work-boys, who would never leave me, I felt as if I should be suffocated, and believed myself to be a dead man. The father of this boy happening to pass by the house, and being a medical man, physician to the Cardinal Jacoacci, the youth ran and stopped him: "Come, father, and see Benvenuto, who has been taken rather poorly, and is in bed." Knowing nothing respecting the nature of the attack, the doctor came close to me, and having felt my

pulse, saw more than he would have desired. Turning suddenly upon the boy, he exclaimed: "O, thou treacherous child, thou hast ruined me for ever! How can I now go before the cardinal?". To this the son hardily replied: "Why, father, my master, Benvenuto, is worth more than all the cardinals in Rome." Regardless of such consolation, the doctor, again turning towards me, said: "Since I am here, I will endeavour to save you. But in most cases such an attack is mortal; it is well yours is not one of the worst kind, and that relief was near at hand."

When he had left, my friend Giovanni Rigogli made his appearance, and taking compassion on my sufferings and loneliness, exclaimed: "Be of good heart, Benvenuto, I will stay with you till you recover." I, on my side, told him not to come near me; that I had no hope; but begged him to take some crowns out of a little box close to my bed, and, after my death, to give them to my poor father. But he was unwilling to obey me, declaring that he knew what was due to friendship; and, come what would, he would attend upon me. His care, with the help of God, and the medicine I took, had a wonderful effect; and I survived, to my own great surprise, that terrific attack. While my wound was still open, with the lint in it, covered with a plaster, I used to ride out on a little wild pony I had, with a long rough coat, about the size of a great bear, and resembling one in every respect.

In this state I went to visit Rosso, the painter, who lived beyond the walls, on the road to Civita Vecchia, at a spot belonging to Count Anguillara, called Cervetri, who seemed rejoiced to see me. "I am come," I said, "to do as you did to me, many, many months ago." He began to laugh, and giving me a hearty welcome, besought me, from regard to the count, not to flurry myself. The latter, too, treated me with the utmost friendship, setting the greatest dainties before me; and invited me to remain, and enjoy the country air. This I did above

a month, taking pleasure-rides along the shores on my little steed; and there I made quite a collection of rare stones, shells, and other aquatic curiosities. On the last day I went, I was suddenly assaulted by a band of Moors, in disguise, who had disembarked from some pirate boat, and who cut off the only way by which I could effect my escape. Leaping upon my little rough-coat, and resolved to dispute the passage, though roasted or boiled alive, as there was nothing else for it, I spurred up to them in good style. As if aware of my purpose, my little Bayard, firing up when he reached the pass, took a running leap, which threw the rascals into confusion in a manner almost impossible to describe. Once on safe ground I returned thanks to God, and went there no more. On mentioning the feat to the count, he ran for his arms; but, on looking out, we saw the boats already upon the waters. Rejoiced at my good fortune, the next day I rode back merrily to Rome.

The plague had by this time almost spent its fury, insomuch that those who had survived it congratulated each other, and expressed great joy at having escaped that fatal scourge. Upon this occasion there was established in Rome a society of painters, sculptors, and goldsmiths, the best that had ever been known in that capital. The founder of this society was a sculptor, named Michelagnolo, a native of Siena, and possessed of such extraordinary abilities that he might justly vie with any artist belonging to the profession; but still more eminently distinguished for being the most complaisant and obliging man in the universe. He was the oldest member of this society, but might be considered as the youngest, on account of his vigorous constitution. We were frequently together, at least twice in the week. I must not omit that to this society also belonged Giulio Romano, a painter, and Giovanni Francesco, both excellent pupils of the great Raffaello da Urbino.

After we had been several times in company together,

our worthy president thought proper to invite us to sup at his house one Sunday, directing that every man should bring his *chère amie* (whom he called *cornacchia*) with him, and he who brought no lady should be obliged to treat the company with a supper. Such members of the society as had no acquaintance amongst the courtesans were obliged to procure ladies with great trouble and expense, for fear of exposing themselves at this agreeable entertainment. I had thought myself vastly well provided in a fine girl of the name of Pantasilea, who had a fondness for me; but I was obliged to resign her to one of my most intimate friends, named Bachiacca, who had been, and still continued, deeply in love with her. The girl, upon this occasion, was somewhat piqued, perceiving that I gave her up to Bachiacca at the first word; a circumstance which induced her to imagine that I slighted her, and made a bad return for the affection she bore me. Her resentment afterwards involved me in a perplexing affair, of which I shall speak more at large in its proper place.

As the time drew near that we were to repair to the assembly above mentioned, and I happened to be without a female companion, I thought myself guilty of a great oversight in not having provided one; but not choosing to be disgraced by bringing any low, despicable creature amongst so many brilliant beauties, I thought of a frolic to increase the mirth of the company. Having formed my plan, I sent for a boy, of about sixteen, named Diego, who lived next door to me, and was son to a Spanish coppersmith. This lad was learning Latin at the grammar-school, to which he applied with great diligence: he had a very genteel person, with a fine complexion: the contours of his face surpassed those of the ancient statue of Antinous, and I had often drawn his likeness, by which I acquired great reputation in my performances. The boy had no acquaintance in town, nor was he known to any of the society: he neglected his dress very much, his attention being entirely engrossed by study. Having sent

for him to my house, I begged that he would dress himself in female attire, which I had provided. He was easily prevailed on to comply, and I, by means of a variety of ornaments, added a considerable lustre to the beauty of his countenance. I put two rings in his ears, in which were two beautiful pearls; the rings being divided in the middle fastened upon his ears, which appeared to be bored: I then dressed his neck with gold necklaces and costly jewels. In the same manner I adorned his fingers with rings, and taking him gently by the ear, placed him before a looking-glass. The boy, seeing himself in the glass, exclaimed with an exulting tone, "Heavens! Is that Diego?"

"Yes," I replied, "that is Diego, of whom I never before asked any favour: but now, for the first time, I will ask him to oblige me in one harmless request; and that is, to go with me in his present dress to the agreeable society which I have mentioned so often."

The lad, who was virtuous and discreet, modestly cast his eyes upon the ground, and deliberated for a few moments, then suddenly looking up, made answer, "I will go with you, Benvenuto; let us set out directly."

I put on his head a large handkerchief, which is called at Rome a summer-cloth. When we came to the place, the whole company were already met, and all rose to salute me: Michelagnolo was between Giulio Romano and Giovanni Francesco. As soon as I had taken the handkerchief from the head of my beautiful companion, Michelagnolo, who, as I have already observed, was one of the most facetious and diverting men in the world, with one hand taking hold of Giulio, and with the other of Giovanni Francesco, with his utmost might drew them towards Diego, and obliged them to kneel down; at the same time falling upon his knees himself, and calling to the company he exclaimed aloud, "See in what form angels descend from the clouds! Though celestial beings are represented as males, behold there are female spirits in heaven like-

wise! O beautiful angel! O angel worthy of all praise, vouchsafe to save—vouchsafe to direct me!" At these words the facetious creature lifted up his right hand, and gave him a papal benediction. Michelagnolo, rising, said that it was customary to kiss the pope's feet, but that angels were to be kissed on the cheeks; he then gave him a salute, at which the youth coloured deeply, which greatly added to his beauty.

This scene being over, every man produced a sonnet upon some subject or other, and we gave them to Michelagnolo for his perusal. The latter read them aloud, in a manner which infinitely increased the effect of their excellence. The company fell into discourse, and many fine things were said, which I shall not here particularise, except one expression which I recollect to have heard from that famous painter Giulio. This great man having looked upon all present with affection, but more attentively upon the ladies, turned about to Michelagnolo, and spoke to him thus: "My dear Michelagnolo, the name of *crow*, which you have given to our ladies, suits them pretty well, though they even seem a little inferior in beauty to crows, when compared to one of the finest peacocks that ever was beheld."

Dinner was now ready to serve up, when Giulio begged to be the person that should place us in proper order. His request being granted, he took the ladies by the hand, and made them sit at the upper end of the table, with mine in the midst of them; the men he placed next, and me in the middle, telling me that I was deserving of all manner of honour and distinction. Behind us there were rows of flower-pots, with beautiful jessamines, which seemed to heighten the charms of the young ladies, and especially of my Diego, beyond expression. Thus we all began to regale ourselves, with great cheerfulness, at that elegant supper. After our repast was over, we were entertained with a concert of music, both vocal and instrumental; and as the performers sang and played with

books before them, my angelical companion desired that he might be allowed to sing his part. He acquitted himself better than any of the rest, and Giulio and Michelagnolo, instead of expressing themselves in the same facetious terms they had done before, seemed to be struck with astonishment, and grew wild and extravagant in their praises. The music being over, one Aurelio Ascolano, a most wonderful *improvvisatore*, sang some admirable verses in praise of the ladies. Whilst this person was singing, the two girls who had my beauty between them never ceased prating and chattering; one of them explained in what manner she had fallen into that sort of life; another asked my companion how it came to be her fate, who were her friends, and how long she had been at Rome, with several other questions of the same kind. Were I to dwell upon trifles of such a nature, I might relate many odd things that were said and done there, occasioned by Pantasilea, who was passionately fond of me; but as that would be foreign to my design, I shall be content with briefly touching upon them.

The discourse of the two courtesans began at last to displease my counterfeit lady, who had taken the name of Pomona. As she was desirous to disengage herself from them and get rid of their loose conversation, she sometimes turned to one side, sometimes to the other: the lady that Giulio brought with him asked whether she was not ill; the counterfeit Pomona answered in the affirmative, whispering that she believed herself to be some months advanced in pregnancy, and felt at that very moment far from well. Upon which the two ladies who had her between them, taking compassion of Pomona, begged her to retire; which in spite of Diego's reluctance, led to an *éclaircissement*. The exasperated females loaded him with abusive language. An outcry being instantly set up, accompanied with great laughter and expressions of surprise, the grave Michelagnolo desired permission of all present to inflict upon me a penance at his own discre-

tion. The company giving their assent to this with loud acclamations, he put me out of pain by thrice repeating "Long live Signor Benvenuto!" This, he said, was the punishment I deserved for so humorous a frolic. Thus ended this pleasant entertainment, together with the day: and the company separating, retired to their respective habitations.

CHAPTER VI

WERE I to give a complete account of all the works I had at this time for persons of different stations in life, my narrative would become altogether tedious; suffice it at present to observe, that I exerted myself with the utmost diligence and care to acquire perfection in the variety of arts above enumerated; and therefore with unceasing perseverance worked at them all. But as an opportunity has not hitherto occurred of giving an account of any of my remarkable performances, I shall presently do so. Michelagnolo of Siena, the sculptor, was at this time employed in erecting a monument to the late Pope Adrian. Giulio Romano the painter was gone into the service of the Marquis of Mantua: the other members had retired to different quarters, as their business happened to lead them, so that our ingenious society was almost entirely dispersed.

Soon afterwards I met with some little Turkish daggers, the handles of which were of iron as well as the blade, and even the scabbard was of that metal. On these were engraved several fine foliages in the Turkish taste, most beautifully filled up with gold. I found I had a strong inclination to cultivate this branch likewise, which was so different from the rest; and finding that I had great success in it, I produced several pieces in this way. My performances, indeed, were much finer and more durable than the Turkish, for several reasons: one was, that I made a much deeper incision in the steel than is generally

practised in Turkish works; the other, that their foliages are nothing else but chicory leaves, with some few flowers of Echites: these have, perhaps, some grace, but they do not continue to please like our foliages. In Italy there is a variety of tastes, and we cut foliages in many different forms. The Lombards make the most beautiful wreaths, representing ivy and vine leaves, and others of the same sort, with agreeable twinings highly pleasing to the eye. The Romans and Tuscans have a much better notion in this respect, for they represent acanthus leaves, with all their festoons and flowers, winding in a variety of forms; and amongst these leaves they insert birds and animals of several sorts with great ingenuity and elegance in the arrangement. They likewise have recourse occasionally to wild flowers, such as those called lions' mouths, from their peculiar shape, accompanied by other fine inventions of the imagination, which are termed grotesques by the ignorant. These foliages have received that name from the moderns, because they are found in certain caverns in Rome, which in ancient days were chambers, baths, studies, halls, and other places of the like nature. The curious happened to discover them in these subterraneous caverns, whose low situation is owing to the raising of the surface of the ground in a series of ages; and as these caverns in Rome are commonly called grottos, they from thence acquired the name of grotesque. But this is not their proper name; for, as the ancients delighted in the composition of chimerical creatures, and gave to the supposed promiscuous breed of animals the appellation of monsters, in like manner artists produced by their foliages monsters of this sort: and that is the proper name for them—not grotesques. In such a taste I made foliages filled up in the manner above mentioned, which were far more elegant and pleasing to the eye than the Turkish works.

It happened about this time that certain vases were discovered, which appeared to be antique urns filled with

ashes. Amongst these were iron rings inlaid with gold in each of which was set a diminutive shell. Learned antiquarians, upon investigating the nature of these rings declared their opinion that they were worn as charms by those who desired to behave with steadiness and resolution either in prosperous or adverse fortune.

I likewise took things of this nature in hand at the request of some gentlemen who were my particular friends, and wrought some of these little rings; but I made them of steel well tempered, and then cut and inlaid with gold, so that they were very beautiful to behold: sometimes for a single ring of this sort I was paid above forty crowns. At that time a sort of small gold medals were in fashion, upon which it was customary for noblemen and gentlemen to cause to be engraved certain devices and fancies of their own, and they wore them commonly upon their caps. I made several things of this sort, but found such works very difficult: the celebrated artist named Caradosso would not take less than a hundred crowns for one of them, because they contained a variety of figures. I was therefore employed, not so much on account of the greatness of his price, as his slowness in working, by some gentlemen, for whom I made one medal, amongst others, in emulation of this renowned artist, on which were four figures that I took uncommon pains with. It happened upon this occasion that the gentlemen, comparing my work to that of the famous Caradosso, declared mine to be by much the more elegant and masterly, and bid me ask whatever I thought proper for my trouble, for I had given them such satisfaction that they were willing to pay me my own price. To this I answered that the best recompense I could receive for my labour, and that which I desired most, was the happiness of making an approach to the excellence of so great a master; and if I appeared to gentlemen of their taste to have attained that honour, I thought myself sufficiently rewarded. Upon my leaving them at these words they immediately sent me a generous

present, with which I was perfectly satisfied; and my ardour to gain the approbation of my employers increased to such a degree that it gave rise to the adventures which I am going to relate: for in the course of this history I must sometimes lose sight of my profession, to record some unlucky accidents by which this toilsome life of mine has been occasionally embittered.

I have already given an account of the ingenious society of artists, and of the adventure of Pantasilea the courtesan, who had so deceitful and dangerous a passion for me, and had been so greatly irritated on account of the frolic of introducing Diego, the Spanish boy, at supper: I shall now conclude that whimsical adventure. As she thought herself injured in the most outrageous manner imaginable, and had vowed revenge, an opportunity soon offered to carry her wicked purpose into execution; and I shall here explain in what manner my life was brought by her malice into the most imminent danger. About this time there arrived at Rome a young gentleman named Luigi Pulci, son to one of the Pulci family who had been beheaded for having violated his own daughter. This young gentleman had an uncommon genius for poetry, was well versed in the Latin language, and wrote with great elegance; he was likewise extremely handsome and genteel. He had just quitted the service of some bishop, whose name I do not remember, and was in a very bad state of health. When he was at Florence there were meetings in the open streets during summer, where he sang extempore, and distinguished himself amongst those who had the greatest talent that way. This singing was so well worth hearing that the divine Michael Angelo Buonarroti, that renowned sculptor and painter, whenever he heard that Pulci was to perform, went to listen to him with the utmost eagerness, and upon these occasions was generally accompanied by one Piloto, a goldsmith, and myself. This was the first rise of my intimacy with Luigi Pulci. After some years had elapsed, he discovered to me the distressed con-

dition he was in at Rome, and begged I would procure him some relief. I was moved to pity on account of his excellent qualities, and further excited by the love of my country, as well as a compassionate disposition. I therefore took him into my house and had him treated with such care that with the assistance of youth and a vigorous constitution his health was quickly restored. While the young man was in this manner endeavouring to recover, he constantly amused himself with reading, and I procured him as many books as I could. Sensible of the obligations I laid him under, he often thanked me with tears in his eyes, assuring me if God ever prospered him, or any way put it in his power, he would endeavour to give me convincing marks of his gratitude. I told him that I had not served him as well as I could have wished, but had done my best, and it was the duty of human beings to assist each other; only admonishing him to show the same kindness to others, who might happen to stand in need of his assistance, as he had done of mine, and desiring that he would look upon me as his friend, and always love me.

The young man began to frequent the court of Rome, in which he was soon taken notice of, and entered into the service of a prelate, a man of fourscore, who was Bishop of Gurk in Galicia. This prelate had a nephew, named Giovanni, a Venetian gentleman. Signor Giovanni seemed to be greatly struck with the shining qualities of Luigi Pulci, and had contracted such a familiar intimacy with him that their mutual confidence seemed unbounded. Luigi having talked to him of me, and of the favours I had done him, Signor Giovanni conceived a desire to know me.

It happened about this time that I had made a little entertainment one evening for my mistress Pantasilea, to which I invited several men of genius of my acquaintance. At the very moment that we were sitting down to table, Signor Giovanni and Luigi Pulci entered the room, and after some little ceremony, were prevailed upon to stay to

supper. The amorous courtesan no sooner set her eye on the handsome youth than she formed a design upon him. I perceived the snare, so that the instant supper was over, I called Luigi aside, and requested him, by the obligations which he had acknowledged himself under to me, not to listen, upon any account, to the insinuations of that artful woman. In answer to this, he exclaimed: "What, my friend Benvenuto, do you take me for a madman?" I told him I did not take him for a madman, but for an inexperienced youth; at the same time assuring him that I gave myself not the least trouble about her, but that my concern was for him, and I should be sorry to see him ruined by so abandoned a strumpet. To this he answered that he wished he might break his neck if he ever would so much as open his lips to her. He must have sworn this oath with great earnestness, for it was his fate afterwards to break his neck, as will appear in the sequel.

He began to appear every day new clothed, either in velvet or silk, and appeared to be addicted to all manner of debauchery; in short, he had thrown aside all his virtuous qualities, and pretended neither to see nor know me when we met; because I had reproved him, telling him that he had abandoned himself to all kinds of vices, and that they would be his destruction. Signor Giovanni, with whom he was a favourite, had bought him a fine black horse, which cost a hundred and fifty crowns; it was an admirable pacer, and Luigi rode it every day to pay his court to the courtesan Pantasilea. Though I beheld this scene, it gave me no manner of concern: I said only that all things act according to their nature, and I attached myself to my business.

It happened one Sunday evening in the summer that we were invited by the famous sculptor Michelagnolo of Siena to sup with him. At this supper Bachiacca, of whom mention has already been made, was a guest, and he had brought with him Pantasilea, with whom he had been formerly intimate. Whilst we were at supper she rose

from table, telling us that a sudden indisposition obliged her to retire, but that she would quickly return. As we were engaged in cheerful conversation, she stayed away longer than we expected: I stood listening, and heard some people talking in a low voice in the street, whilst I held a knife in my hand, which I made use of at table to cut my victuals. The window was so near the table, that, having risen up a little, I saw Luigi Pulci and Pantasilea in close conference, and overheard the former say: "If that cursed Benvenuto should happen to discover us we should be undone." She made answer: "Luigi, be under no apprehensions; observe what a noise they are making; they are far from thinking of us." At these words I perceived who they were, when immediately leaping from the window, I seized Luigi by the cloak, and should certainly have killed him with the knife in my hand, had he not instantly clapped spurs to a little white horse which he rode, and leaving his cloak behind to save his life, fled; and Pantasilea ran to a neighbouring church. Those who were at table having suddenly risen, came all up to me, and begged I would not give myself or them any trouble for the sake of a harlot. I answered that I should never have stirred upon her account, but that I could not help showing my resentment to that villain, who behaved to me in so perfidious a manner.

I would not therefore give ear to the persuasions and entreaties of my worthy friends, but snatching up my sword, went unaccompanied to Prati, for the house where we were at supper was near the gate Del Castello, which led to Prati. It was not long before the sun set, and I returned slowly to Rome, when it was already dark, but the gates of the city were not locked. I repaired to Pantasilea's habitation, firmly resolved, in case Luigi Pulci should be there, to treat them both as they deserved. Perceiving that there was nobody in the house but a servant girl, named Canida, I laid aside my cloak and the scabbard of my sword, and came up to the house, which stood behind

the place called Banchi, upon the river Tiber. Opposite to this house was a garden belonging to an innkeeper, whose name was Romolo: this garden was enclosed with a quick-set hedge, in which I concealed myself in order to wait the coming of the lady and her gallant. I had remained there some time when my friend Bachiacca happened to pass by, who, whether he really thought I should go there, or had been told so, called to me in a low voice by the name of *gossip*, for so we used to style each other in jest. He besought me for God's sake to desist, uttering these words almost with tears in his eyes: "Gossip, I beg you would not hurt this poor unfortunate woman, for nothing can justly be laid to her charge."—"If you do not directly quit the place," cried I, "I will cut you across the head with my sword." My poor gossip, frightened by this language, felt much disordered, and had not gone far when he found himself under a necessity of obeying a natural impulse.

It was a bright starry night, and the sky shone with a refulgent lustre; when suddenly I heard the noise of several horses galloping on both sides. This was occasioned by Luigi and Pantasilea, who were accompanied by one Signor Benvegnato of Perugia, chamberlain to Pope Clement: they had four valiant captains from Perugia attending them, with other brave young officers, in all twelve persons that wore swords. When I perceived my situation, not knowing which way to get off, I resolved to continue under the hedge; but the briars pricked and hurt me very much, so that I could no longer bear it, but like a goaded bull, resolved to take a leap and seek my safety by flight. At this time Luigi had his arms about Pantasilea's neck, and told her that he must have a kiss in spite of that traitor Benvenuto. These words, which added a new sting to the pricking of the briars, provoked me to such a degree that I leaped out of the hedge, and lifting up my sword, cried out: "I will instantly be the death of you all." My sword fell upon Luigi's shoulders, but as the young fellow was

protected by a coat of mail, for they had wrapped him up in iron, the weapon was turned aside, and after cutting him over the nose, wounded the face of Pantasilea. Both having fallen to the ground, Bachiacca with his hose half down his legs, ran away screaming. I then turned about boldly to the rest with my drawn sword, when my valiant adversaries hearing a loud uproar in the inn, imagined they had to deal with a party of a hundred men; they had however drawn their swords, but some of their horses taking fright, this occasioned so much confusion amongst them, that two of the cleverest were thrown, and the rest betook themselves to flight.

I seeing the affair turn out happily, made off with the utmost speed, pleased to get handsomely rid of this troublesome affair, and not caring to tempt fortune further than honour required. In this terrible confusion and hurly-burly, some of the gentlemen and officers had wounded themselves with their own swords. Signor Benvegnato, the pope's chamberlain, was thrown down and trampled upon by his own mule; his servant attempting to draw his sword, fell with him at the same time, and gave his master a deep wound in the hand. This accident, more than all the rest, made Signor Benvegnato swear in his Perugian jargon, that by G— *Benvegnato* should teach *Benvenuto* manners. He desired one of the officers, who perhaps had more courage than the rest, but was young and had very little to say for himself, to deliver me a challenge. This gentleman called upon me at the house of a Neapolitan nobleman, who had heard of my abilities, and seen some of my performances; and being likewise convinced that I was both in mind and body fit for the military profession, to which he was attached above all others, grew exceedingly fond of me. Seeing myself thus protected and caressed, and being in proper spirits, I gave such an answer to the officer, as I believe made him heartily repent his coming on such an errand.

A few days after, Luigi, Pantasilea, and the rest, being

pretty well recovered of their wounds, the nobleman, my patron, was solicited by Signor Benvegnato, whose passion had by this time subsided, to prevail upon me to be reconciled to Luigi, adding that the gallant officers who were with him, and who had never had any difference with me on their own account, would be glad to cultivate my acquaintance. The nobleman made answer that he would persuade me to agree to all that was proposed, and should willingly undertake to accommodate matters, upon condition that there was to be no upbraiding on either side for what had passed, as that would reflect dishonour on themselves; that we should only shake hands and drink together in token of reconcilement, and so he would engage to make all things agreeable. This design was carried into execution. One Thursday evening the nobleman carried me to the house of Signor Benvegnato, where all the military gentlemen who had been in the late skirmish were at table. My patron was accompanied by above thirty gallant men well armed, a circumstance which Signor Benvegnato did not expect. Having entered the hall, my friend going before, and I following him, he addressed them thus: "Save you, gentlemen; I am come with Benvenuto, whom I love as my own brother; and we gladly present ourselves with an intention to do whatever you think proper to enjoin us." Benvegnato seeing the hall crowded with such a number, made answer: "All we desire of you is peace: we want nothing more." He then promised that the Governor of Rome should give me no trouble. Thus we were reconciled, and I returned to my shop; but I was scarce able to pass an hour without the company of the Neapolitan nobleman, who either visited me or sent for me to his own house.

In the meantime Luigi Pulci being cured, every day took an airing upon his black horse, which he managed with great skill. One day, after there had fallen a drizzling rain, having made his horse prance and curvet before Pantasilea's door, he happened to slip, and the horse fell

upon him. By this accident he broke his right leg, and a few days after died in the house of Pantasilea; the curse which he had solemnly invoked against himself in the presence of God being thus accomplished. Hence it appears that the Deity watches over the conduct both of the good and bad, and rewards all according to their deserts.

CHAPTER VII

All Italy was now up in arms, when Pope Clement sent to Signor Giovanni de' Medici for some troops, which accordingly marched to his assistance. These auxiliaries did so much mischief in Rome that tradesmen were not in safety in their shops, which made me retire to a small house, behind the place called Banchi, where I worked for my particular friends. The business I was employed in at that time was not of any great importance: I therefore shall not at present enlarge upon it. I then took great delight in music, and other amusements of a like nature. Pope Clement having, by the advice of Signor Jacopo Salviati, dismissed the five companies which had been sent him by Signor Giovanni, lately deceased in Lombardy, the Constable Bourbon, finding that there were no troops in Rome, eagerly advanced with his army towards that capital. Upon the news of his approach all the inhabitants took up arms. I happened to be intimately acquainted with Alessandro, the son of Pietro del Bene, who, at the time that the Colonnas came to Rome, had requested me to guard his house: upon this more important occasion, he begged I would raise a company of fifty men to guard the same house, and undertake to be their commander, as I had done at the time of the Colonnas. I accordingly engaged fifty brave young men, and we took up our quarters in his house, where we were well paid and kindly treated.

The army of the Duke of Bourbon having already appeared before the walls of Rome, Alessandro del Bene requested I would go with him to oppose the enemy: I accordingly complied, and taking one of the stoutest youths with us, we were afterwards joined on our way by a young man of the name of Cecchino della Casa. We came up to the walls of Campo Santo, and there descried that great army, which was employing every effort to enter the town at that part of the wall to which we had approached. Many young men were slain without the walls, where they fought with the utmost fury: there was a remarkably thick mist. I turned to Alessandro and spoke to him thus: "Let us return home with the utmost speed, since it is impossible for us here to make any stand; behold the enemy scale the walls, and our countrymen fly before them, overpowered by numbers." Alessandro, much alarmed, answered: "Would to God we had never come hither:" and so saying, he turned with the utmost precipitation, in order to depart. I thereupon reproved him, saying: "Since you have brought me hither, I am determined to perform some manly action;" and, levelling my arquebuse where I saw the thickest crowd of the enemy, I discharged it with a deliberate aim at a person who seemed to be lifted above the rest; but the mist prevented me from distinguishing whether he was on horseback or on foot. Then, turning suddenly about to Alessandro and Cecchino, I bid them fire off their pieces, and showed them how to escape every shot of the besiegers. Having accordingly each one of us fired twice, I cautiously approached the walls, and perceived that there was an extraordinary confusion among the assailants, occasioned by our having shot the Duke of Bourbon: he was, as I understood afterwards, that chief personage whom I saw raised above the rest.

Quitting our post we now passed through Campo Santo, and entered by the quarter of St. Peter; from thence we passed behind the church of St. Angelo, and reached the gate of the Castle of St. Angelo with the greatest diffi-

culty imaginable; for Signor Renzo da Ceri, and Signor Orazio Baglioni, were wounding and killing everybody that deserted the walls. When we arrived at the gate above mentioned, part of the enemy had already entered Rome, and were at our heels. The castellan had thought proper to let down the portcullis; but there was just room enough made for us four to enter. No sooner had we entered than the captain Pallone de' Medici pressed me into the service because I belonged to the pope's household; and forced me to leave Alessandro, very much against my will. At this very juncture, as I mounted the ramparts, Pope Clement had entered the Castle of St. Angelo by the long gallery from St. Peter's; for he did not choose to quit the Vatican sooner, never once dreaming that the enemy would storm the city. As soon as I found myself within the castle walls, I went up to some pieces of artillery, which a bombardier, named Giuliano, a Florentine, had under his direction. This Giuliano, standing upon one of the battlements, saw his house pillaged, and his wife and children cruelly used; fearing to shoot any of his friends, he did not venture to fire the guns, but throwing the match upon the ground, made a piteous lamentation, tearing his hair, and uttering the most doleful cries. His example was followed by several other gunners, which vexed me to such a degree that I took one of the matches, and getting some people to assist me, who had not the same passions to disturb them, I directed the fire of the artillery and falcons where I saw occasion, and killed a considerable number of the enemy.

If I had not taken this step, the party, which entered Rome that morning, would have proceeded directly to the castle; and it might, possibly, have been a very easy matter for them to have stormed it, as they would have met with no obstruction from the artillery. I continued to fire away, which made some cardinals and gentlemen bless me, and extol my activity to the skies. Emboldened

by this, I used my utmost exertions: let it suffice that it was I that preserved the castle that morning, and by whose means the other bombardiers began to resume their duty; and so I continued to act the whole day.

Pope Clement having appointed a Roman nobleman, whose name was Antonio Santa Croce, to be chief engineer, this nobleman came to me in the evening, whilst the enemy's army was entering Rome, by the quarter of Trastevere, and behaving to me with the greatest demonstrations of kindness, posted me with five great guns in the highest parts of the castle, called "dall' Angiolo," which goes quite round the fortress, and looks both towards the meadows and towards Rome. He appointed several persons to serve under me, and assist me in managing the artillery; then causing me to be paid beforehand, he gave me a portion of bread and wine, and begged I would continue to behave as I had begun. I, who was at times more inclined to arms than to my own profession, obeyed my orders with such alacrity that I had better success than if I had been following my own business.

Night being come, and the enemy having entered Rome, we, who were in the castle, and I, more than any of the rest, who always took delight in beholding new and extraordinary sights, stood contemplating this strange novelty and the fire which those who were in any other part of the city could neither see nor conceive. I shall not, however, deviate from the history of my life, for the sake of such descriptions.

As I continued my operations in the artillery, there happened to me, during a month that we were besieged in the castle, many extraordinary accidents, and all very well worth relating; but in order to be concise and keep as much within the sphere of my profession as possible, I shall pass over most of these events in silence, relating only such as I cannot suppress;—I mean the most remarkable.

The first then is, that Signor Antonio Santa Croce, having made me come down from the place called Angiolo, with a view to fire at certain houses in the neighbourhood of the castle, into which some of the enemy had entered, whilst I was firing, a cannon-shot fell near me, which hit part of a battlement, and, fortunately for me, carried off a great part of it; for the remainder, falling upon my breast, stopped my breath, and I lay prostrate upon the ground, but could hear a great deal of what was said by the by-standers; amongst others, Signor Antonio Santa Croce lamented me as dead, and exclaimed aloud: "Alas! we have lost our best support!" At this noise, an intimate acquaintance of mine, who was called Giovanni Francesco, the musician (though this person had a greater turn to physic than music), wept bitterly, and ran directly for a flask of the best Greek wine; then making a slate red hot, put a handful of wormwood upon it, and sprinkling it with the wine, applied it to that part of my breast where I appeared to have received the injury. Such was the efficacy of the wormwood that it immediately restored my vigour. I made an attempt to speak, but found myself unable to articulate because some foolish soldiers had filled my mouth with earth, thinking that they had thereby given me the sacrament; though it had nearly proved my ruin, for I could scarcely recover myself, as the earth did me a great deal more harm than the contusion. However, I escaped with life, and returned to those who were about the artillery, seconding their operations with my best abilities and endeavours.

Pope Clement had sent to ask assistance of the Duke of Urbino, who was with the Venetian army, and directed his ambassador to tell his excellency that so long as the castle should continue every night to make three fires on its top, at the same time firing three guns thrice over, these should be considered as signals that the fort had not surrendered. I was employed to make these signals, and to fire the guns; and as the besiegers continued to annoy us greatly,

I pointed the artillery in such a manner as might be likely to injure them most, and retard their operations. The pope upon this account conceived a great liking to me, seeing that I acquitted myself with all the prudence and sagacity requisite on such occasions. The Duke of Urbino never sent the succours stipulated; therefore as my intention is not to give a particular account of this siege, I shall dwell upon no more of the circumstances of it.

Whilst I continued to be employed in my destructive business of an engineer, several cardinals came frequently to see me, but above all the Cardinals of Ravenna and Gaddi, whom I often warned not to come near me, as their scarlet hats could be seen at a distance, which exposed both them and myself to great danger from the neighbouring palaces, such as the Torre de' Beni; but persuasions having no effect, I at last got them confined, by which I incurred their enmity and ill-will. Signor Orazio Baglioni, my very good friend, likewise frequently came where I was. Happening to be one day in conversation with me, he observed some appearances at a certain inn, which stood without the Castle-gate, at a place called Baccanello: the sign of this inn was the Sun, painted between two red windows, which were shut. Orazio, apprehending that opposite to this sign between the two windows was a table surrounded by soldiers carousing, said to me: "Benvenuto, if you were to fire your middle cannon near yonder Sun, I believe you would do execution; for I hear a great noise, and fancy there must be persons of consequence in that quarter."—"Sir," said I, "what I myself see is sufficient to induce me to make a discharge at yon Sun, but I am afraid of that barrel full of stones, which stands hard by the mouth of the gun; for the force of the discharge, and the very wind of the cannon, will certainly throw it down. Orazio replied: "For God's sake, Benvenuto, lose no time: in the first place, it is impossible, considering how the barrel stands, that the wind of the cannon should throw it down; but even if it

should fall, and the pope himself be under it, the harm would not be so great as you imagine; so fire, fire." I, without thinking more of the matter, made a discharge at the Sun as I had promised: the barrel, which was filled with stones, fell to the ground, as I thought it would, exactly between Cardinal Farnese and Signor Jacopo Salviati, both of whom it was near destroying. What saved them was Cardinal Farnese's reproaching Signor Jacopo with being the cause of the sack of Rome; and as they both abused and railed at each other, their movements on the occasion alone prevented the barrel of stones from dashing them to pieces. Orazio having heard the noise, went down as fast as possible; and I going towards the place where the barrel had fallen, heard some people say, "That gunner should be killed." This induced me to turn two falconets towards the steps leading to the battery, with a firm resolution to fire one of them at the first that should presume to ascend. The servants of Cardinal Farnese being sent by their master to attack me, I advanced in order to fire. As I knew some of them, I said: "Villains, if you do not instantly quit the place, or if any of you attempt to mount these stairs, I have two falconets ready charged, with which I will blow you into dust. Go, tell the cardinal from me that I have done nothing but by the command of my superiors: I have been acting in defence of the clergy, and not to hurt them."

The servants having retired, Orazio came running upstairs; but I ordered him to stand back, declaring that if he did not, I would kill him upon the spot. He stopped a little, not without fear, and cried out, "Benvenuto, I am your friend." I answered, "Sir, only come by yourself, and you may come as often as you think proper." He then made a pause, for he was exceedingly proud, and said peevishly, "I have a mind to come up no more, but to act quite the reverse of what I had intended towards you." I told him that as I had received my post to

defend others, I was likewise able to defend myself. He declared he was alone; and when he came up, appeared to be so much altered in countenance that I kept my hand upon my sword and looked sternly at him as an enemy. Upon this he began to laugh, and his colour returning, he said to me with all the good humour imaginable: "My dear Benvenuto, no man can be more your friend than I am, and when an opportunity offers, I will endeavour to prove it; would to God you had killed those two scoundrels! one of whom has already done so much mischief, and the other is likely to do more." He then desired me, in case I was asked, not to discover that he had been present when I fired the guns, and to make myself quite easy about the consequences. This affair made a great noise, which lasted a long time; but I shall not dwell upon it any longer.

I now gave my whole attention to firing my guns, by which means I did signal execution, so that I had in a high degree acquired the favour and good graces of his Holiness. There passed not a day that I did not kill some of the army without the castle.

One day amongst others the pope happened to walk upon the round rampart, when he saw in the public walks a Spanish colonel, whom he knew by certain tokens; and understanding that he had formerly been in his service, he said something concerning him, all the while observing him attentively. I who was above at the battery, and knew nothing of the matter, but saw a man who was employed in getting the trenches repaired, and who stood with a spear in his hand, dressed in rose-colour, began to deliberate how I should lay him flat. I took my swivel, which was almost equal to a demi-culverin, turned it round, and charging it with a good quantity of fine and coarse powder mixed, aimed it at him exactly, though he was at so great a distance that it could not be expected any effort of art should make such pieces carry so far. I fired off the gun, and hit the man exactly in the middle.

He had arrogantly placed his sword before him in a sort of Spanish bravado; but the ball of my piece struck against his sword, and the man was seen severed into two pieces. The pope, who did not dream of any such thing, was highly delighted and surprised at what he saw, as well because he thought it impossible that such a piece could carry so far, as that he could not conceive how the man could be cut into two pieces. Upon this he sent for me, and made an inquiry into the whole affair. I told him the art I had used to fire in that manner; but as for the man's being split into two pieces, neither he nor I was able to account for it. So, falling upon my knees, I entreated his Holiness to absolve me from the guilt of homicide, as likewise from other crimes which I had committed in that castle in the service of the Church. The pope, lifting up his hands, and making the sign of the cross over me, said that he blessed me, and gave me his absolution for all the homicides that I had ever committed, or ever should commit, in the service of the Apostolic Church.

Upon quitting him I again went up to the battery, and continuing to keep a constant fire, I scarcely once missed all the time. My drawing, my elegant studies, and my taste for music, all vanished before this butchering business; and if I were to give a particular account of all the exploits I performed in this infernal employment, I should astonish the world; but I pass them by for the sake of brevity. I shall only touch upon some of the most remarkable, which should not be omitted upon any account. As I was incessantly meditating how to employ myself in defence of the Church, I took it into consideration that the enemy every night changed their guard, and passed through the great gate of S. Spirito, which was indeed a reasonable length for the artillery to carry; but because I shot crossways I did not do so much execution as I wished. And yet there was every day a considerable number slain, so that the enemy, seeing the pass become

dangerous, one night heaped above thirty barrels upon the top of a house, which obstructed my prospect. Having now reflected more maturely upon the matter than I had done at first, I levelled my whole five pieces of artillery against those barrels, and waited for the relieving of the guard till the dusk of the evening. As they imagined themselves in perfect security, they came on slower and in greater numbers than usual. I then fired off my pieces, and not only threw the barrels to the ground, but with the same shot killed above thirty men. Upon my repeating this feat two or three times more, the soldiers were put into such disorder, that amongst those who had loaded themselves with plunder at the sacking of Rome, some of them, desirous of enjoying the fruits of their military toil, were disposed to mutiny against their officers and march off; but being appeased by a valiant captain, whose name was Gian d'Urbino, they were with great difficulty prevailed on to turn through another pass in order to relieve the guard. This obliged them to walk about three miles; whereas they at first had but half a mile to march. This affair being over, all the nobility in the castle conferred extraordinary favours on me. I choose to relate this exploit on account of its importance, though it is foreign to the profession which first induced me to take pen in hand. But if I wished to embellish the history of my life with such events, my narrative would become too voluminous. I shall therefore relate but one more of this sort, which I have reserved for its proper place.

I must here anticipate a little in point of time, and inform the reader how Pope Clement, in order to preserve his regalia, together with all the jewels of the apostolical chamber, sent for me, and shut himself up with the master of the horse and me in an apartment. This master of the horse had formerly been equerry to Filippo Strozzi, and was a Frenchman. Pope Clement had enriched him considerably, being one of his favourite domestics. He was

a person of mean birth, yet the pope put as much confidence in him as if he had been his own brother. Thus, while we were shut up together in the above-mentioned chamber, they placed before me the regalia, with all the vast quantity of jewels belonging to the apostolical chamber, and his Holiness ordered me to take off the gold in which they were set. I did as I was directed, and wrapping up each of them in a little piece of paper, we sewed them in the skirts of the pope's clothes, and those of the master of the horse. They then gave me all the gold, which amounted to about a hundred pounds weight, and ordered me to melt it with the utmost secrecy. I repaired to the Angelo battery, where was my apartment, which I could shut to avoid being seen or interrupted in my operation; and having there made a little furnace with bricks, and fastened to the bottom of the furnace a little pot about the size of a dish, I threw the gold upon the coals, and it fell by degrees into the pot.

Whilst this furnace was going, I constantly watched my opportunity to annoy the enemy, and soon did them a great deal of damage in their trenches with certain antique missiles, which I found in the armoury belonging to the castle. Having taken a swivel and a falconet, both somewhat broken at the mouth, I filled them with those weapons, and then fired off the pieces, which flew down like wildfire, doing a great deal of damage to the trenches. Thus keeping my pieces constantly in order whilst I was melting the gold, I saw towards the evening a person mounted upon a little mule, who came upon the border of the trench; the mule went at a great rate, and the person spoke to the men in the trenches. I thought it most advisable to fire off my artillery before he came quite opposite to me; so having taken aim exactly, I fired and wounded him in the face with one of the missiles; the others hit the mule, which instantly fell dead. Hearing a loud noise in the trenches, I discharged the other piece, which did great execution. The person above mentioned

was the Prince of Orange, who was carried through the trenches to a neighbouring inn, whither all the nobility of the army quickly repaired.

Pope Clement having heard of what I had done, immediately sent for me, and desired me to give him an account of what had happened. I related to him the whole transaction, and further told him that this must be some person of the first rank, because all the chief officers of the army, as they appeared to me, had immediately repaired to the inn to which he had been conveyed. The pope, being a person of great sagacity, sent for Signor Antonio Santa Croce, who was the chief engineer, as I have already observed, and directed him to command all the gunners to point their whole artillery, which was very considerable, against the inn, and all to discharge their pieces at the firing of a musket; that by killing those chief officers, the army, which would be in a great measure deprived of its leaders, might be totally dispersed; and God would at last hear their fervent and constant prayers, and thus deliver them from those impious invaders.

We thereupon put our artillery in order according to the directions of Santa Croce, and waited for the signal to fire. Cardinal Orsini being informed of this resolution, came to high words with the pope, and declared in the most peremptory manner, that no such step should be taken upon any account, as an accommodation was then upon the carpet, and if those officers were killed, the army being without a leader, would storm the castle, and put them all to the sword, therefore he would by no means agree to our project. The poor pope, quite in despair to see himself thus attacked both within and without, told the cardinal and his party that he left the whole affair to their discretion. The order being thus revoked, I, who could not stand idle and inactive, when I perceived that they were come to command me not to fire, discharged the middle cannon, and the ball hit a pillar of that house, about which a considerable crowd was gathered.

This shot made such havoc amongst the enemy that they were upon the point of quitting the inn. Cardinal Orsini was so incensed at this that he was absolutely for having me hanged or put to death in some way or other; but the pope took my part with great spirit and resolution. As I do not consider myself in the light of a professed historian, I shall not here insert the altercation that passed between them upon the occasion, but shall give my whole attention to my own business.

As soon as I had melted the gold, I carried it to the pope, who returned me thanks, and ordered the master of the horse to give me five-and-twenty crowns, at the same time making an apology because he had it not in his power to recompense me more amply.

CHAPTER VIII

A FEW days after, an agreement was concluded with the Imperialists, when I set out with Signor Orazio Baglioni, and three hundred soldiers, towards Perugia. This gentleman wished me to accept of the command of those men; but I declined his offer, telling him I chose to see my father first, and settle the affair of my banishment from Florence. He then acquainted me that I had already been made a captain by the Florentines. Signor Pier Maria di Lotto was also there, on a mission from Florence, to whom Signor Baglioni highly recommended me as a follower of his own. So I repaired to Florence, in company with several comrades.

The plague had made terrible havoc in that city; but I found my worthy father alive, who thought that I must either have been killed at the sack of Rome, or that I should return to him quite naked and destitute. It proved, however, quite the reverse: I was alive, with my pockets well lined, and had a servant and a horse. So overjoyed was

my aged father at the sight of his son, that I thought, whilst he was kissing and embracing me, he would die of the transport. I soon related to him the horrors of the sack of Rome, and presented him with a considerable number of crowns, which I had gained by the war. Our first caresses and demonstrations of joy being over, we repaired to the magistrates to compromise the affair of my banishment. One of those who had been concerned in pronouncing the sentence against me, happened to be then in the rotation of his office; he was the same that had said to my father, in a passion, that he would send me with a guard of spearmen to prison. My father, therefore, to avenge my severe treatment, threw out some sharp expressions against him, emboldened by the favours which I had received from Signor Orazio Baglioni. Matters standing thus, I told my father that Signor Orazio had appointed me captain in the Florentines' service, and it was proper I should begin to think of raising my company. My poor father, quite stunned at these words, begged and entreated me not to think of any such thing, though he was very sensible that I was equal to that, and even to any undertaking of the greatest importance; adding, that he had already one son in the army, my younger brother, who was so gallant a youth; and that I ought to attach myself totally to that admirable art, which I had followed so many years with unwearied application.

Though I promised to obey him, he judged, like a man of sense, that in case Signor Orazio should come to Florence, I should not fail, either through a regard to my promise, or some other motives, to embrace the military profession. He therefore devised a very good expedient to prevent it, which was to persuade me to remove from Florence; and said: "My dear son, a most dreadful pestilence rages in this city, and you are come home just at the time of its greatest fury: I remember when I was very young I went to Mantua, where I met with a kind reception, and made a stay of several years. I request you, and

even command you, for my sake to repair thither, and to do it directly, and not so much as defer it till to-morrow." As I was always glad of an opportunity of seeing the world, and had never been at Mantua, I readily complied with his request. The greatest part of the money I had brought with me I left with the old man, promising to assist him in whatever part of the world I should happen to live: at the same time I earnestly recommended it to my eldest sister to take care of my father. The name of this sister was Cosa; and as she never chose to marry, she was admitted as a nun of St. Ursula; so she stayed to attend and take care of my old father, and likewise to direct my younger sister, who was married to a sculptor of the name of Bartolomeo. Thus, my father giving me his blessing, I mounted my good horse, and set out for Mantua.

My narrative would swell to a tedious prolixity, were I to give the reader a circumstantial account of this little journey. As all Italy was at that time ravaged by war and pestilence, I, with great difficulty, travelled as far as Mantua, where, when I arrived, I endeavoured to get into business, and was immediately employed by one Signor Niccolò, a Milanese, who was goldsmith to the duke. As soon as I had obtained employment, I went to pay a visit to Giulio Romano, a most excellent painter, and my particular friend: he gave me the kindest reception imaginable, and seemed to take it very ill that I had not, on my arrival, come directly to alight at his door. This painter lived like a nobleman, and was employed in a work for the duke, without the gate of Mantua, at a place called the Te. This work was grand and magnificent, as it appears to this day. Giulio immediately recommended me in the most honourable terms to the duke, who gave me an order to make a little shrine for the relic of the blood of Christ, which the Mantuans boast themselves to be possessed of, and affirm to have been brought thither by Longinus: he then turned to Signor Giulio, and desired him to draw a model of the shrine. Giulio made answer: "Please your

excellency, Benvenuto is a man that has no occasion for the design of another artist; and this you will readily acknowledge when you see his performance." Having undertaken this task, I sketched out a design for the shrine, in which the phial of blood could easily be contained. I also made a little model of wax representing a Christ sitting, who, in His left hand, which was raised aloft, held His cross, in a reclining attitude, and, with His right hand, seemed to be going to tear open the wound in His side. When I had finished this model, the duke was so highly pleased with it that he grew lavish of his favours to me, giving me to understand that I should continue in his service, and he would amply provide for me.

Having at this juncture paid my respects to the cardinal his brother, the latter requested the duke to give me permission to make his pontifical seal, which I immediately took in hand. Whilst I was employed about this work, a quartan fever attacked me, and I grew delirious; I then began to curse Mantua, and its sovereign, and all that chose it for their place of residence. These words were reported to the duke by his Milanese goldsmith, who saw plainly that his excellency had a desire to retain me in his service. The duke having heard these ravings, was incensed against me to the highest degree, and I being as much dissatisfied with Mantua, our disgust was reciprocal. After finishing my seal in about four months, with several other little works which I executed for the duke in the name of the cardinal, I was well paid by the latter, who entreated me to return to Rome, to that excellent country where we had become acquainted.

I left Mantua with a good purse of crowns, and arrived at Governo, the place where the brave Signor Giovanni de' Medici was slain. I was attacked in this place by a slight fever, which did not in the least interrupt my journey; there it left me, never to trouble me afterwards. Upon my arrival at Florence, thinking to find my dear father alive, I knocked at the door; when a hump-backed

old woman, in a violent rage, looked out of the window, and bidding me, with the most abusive language, be gone, told me I had vexed her. I made answer to the hag: "Old beldame, is there no other face to be seen in this house but you, with your unlucky, ill-boding voice?"—"No! begone, and bad luck to you!" she retorted. I rebuked her sharply; and it was more than two hours before our dispute brought a woman in the neighbourhood to her window, who told me that my father, and all belonging to my family, were dead of the plague; and as I partly guessed this to be the case, my grief was the less violent. The good woman, at the same time, acquainted me that the only one of my relations left alive was my younger sister, whose name was Liperata; and that a religious lady, called Mona Andrea de' Bellacci, had taken care of her. I then set out for my inn, and accidentally meeting a friend of mine, whose name was Giovanni Rigogli, I alighted at his house, and we went together to the grand square, where I received information that my brother was still living, of whom I went in quest to the house of a friend of his, named Bertino Aldobrandi.

Upon finding my brother, we embraced each other with the utmost ardour of affection, and what rendered our demonstrations of joy the more rapturous was, that we had each received news of the other's death. My brother afterwards bursting into a loud fit of laughter, and at the same time expressing the utmost surprise, took me by the hand, and said: "Come, brother, I will conduct you to a place which you would never think of. The case is this: I have procured our sister Liperata, who has no doubt of your death, a second husband." Whilst we were going to her house, we related to each other the many extraordinary events which had befallen us; and when we reached the place, our sister was so astonished at the unexpected sight, that she fell into my arms in a swoon. If my brother had not been present, this sudden accident, which deprived her of all utterance, would have prevented the husband from

knowing that I was her relation. My brother Cecchino assisting our sister, who had fainted away, she soon came to herself. Having for a while lamented her father, her sister, her husband, and a little son that she had been deprived of, she began to prepare supper; and during the rest of the evening, there was not a word more spoken of the dead; but much about weddings: thus we supped together with the greatest cheerfulness and satisfaction imaginable.

My brother and sister prevailed upon me to stay at Florence, though my own inclination led me to return to Rome. Besides that, my dear friend, by whom, as I have already mentioned, I had been assisted in my distress, I mean Piero, the son of Giovanni Landi, joined with them in persuading me to reside some time in Florence. For the Medici family being driven out of that city, viz. Signor Ippolito and Signor Alessandro (one of whom was afterwards Cardinal and the other Duke of Florence), Piero was for having me stay by all means, and await the event. I therefore began to work in the New Market, and set a great number of jewels, by which I was a considerable gainer.

About this time arrived at Florence a native of Siena, a man of lively genius, whose name was Girolamo Maretti, and who had resided a long time in Turkey: he came to my shop, and employed me to make him a golden medal, to be worn upon a hat. He desired me to represent upon the medal the figure of Hercules tearing asunder the jaws of the lion. I instantly set about the work, and, whilst I was employed upon it, Michael Angelo Buonarroti came to see it. I had taken immense pains with this piece: the attitude and strength of the animal were better represented than in any previous performance of the kind. My manner of working was likewise entirely new to the divine Michael Angelo, so that he praised me to such a degree that I conceived the strongest inclination imaginable to perform something extraordinary. But as I had no other employ

than setting jewels, though I could not earn more money in any other branch, I was not yet satisfied, but wished to be concerned in business of more consequence.

It happened about this time that one Federigo Ginori, a young man of sublime genius (who had resided several years at Naples, and having a very advantageous person, had an intrigue with a princess in that city), conceived a fancy to make a medal representing Atlas, with a world upon his shoulders: he therefore requested the divine Michael Angelo to draw him a design. The latter said to him: "Go to a young jeweller, whose name is Benvenuto; he will serve you as well as you could wish: but that you may not think I shun so slight a trouble, I will, with all the pleasure imaginable, sketch you out a design; but at the same time speak to Benvenuto to draw you another, and take the best of the two for your model."

Federigo Ginori came to me accordingly, and told me what he wanted, letting me know withal how highly the divine Michael Angelo had commended me, and that it was at his recommendation he had recourse to my assistance; that that great man had promised him a design, and that I was also to make a little waxen model. I accordingly set about it with the utmost ardour of application. When I had finished it, a painter, who was an intimate friend of Michael Angelo, and whose name was Giuliano Bugiardini, brought me his design of the Atlas. At the same time I showed this Giuliano my little model of wax, which was very different from the drawing made by Michael Angelo; but Federigo and Bugiardini determined that I should follow my own model. I then began my work, and the divine Michael Angelo bestowed the highest praises imaginable, both on me and my performance. This work was a figure engraved on a thin plate, supporting on its shoulders the heavens, represented by a ball of crystal, on which was cut the zodiac, with a field of lapis lazuli. The effect was excessively fine. Under it was this motto, *Summam tulisse juvat.* Federigo, being satisfied with my perform-

ance, paid me generously. Signor Luigi Alamanni, an intimate friend of Federigo, happening to be at this time in Florence, the latter brought him several times to my house, and by his means we became intimately acquainted.

Pope Clement having declared war against Florence, that city prepared to make a defence; orders were therefore given that the militia should muster in every quarter, and I was commanded to take arms myself. I got ready in the best manner I could, and exercised with the first nobility in Florence, who seemed all very well disposed to exert their utmost efforts in defence of their country: the prayers customary on such occasions were made in every quarter of the city. The young men were oftener assembled than usual, and nothing else was talked of, but how to repel the enemy. It happened one day, about noon, that a number of gallant youths, of the first quality in the city, were assembled in my shop, when a letter was brought me from a certain person at Rome, who was called Jacopino della Barca; his true name was Jacopo della Sciorina, but in Rome he had the appellation of "della Barca," because he was master of a ferry over the river Tiber, between the Ponte Sisto, and the Ponte St. Angelo. This Jacopo was a very ingenious person, highly entertaining and agreeable in company: he had formerly been a manufacturer of cloth in Florence, and was now in high favour with Pope Clement, who took great delight in his conversation. As they happened, at a particular time, to be conversing on various topics, the sack of Rome was mentioned, with the affair of the castle. In the course of this conversation, the pope, recollecting my services, spoke of my conduct on that occasion in the most favourable terms imaginable; adding, that if he knew where I was, he should be glad to have me again in his service. Master Jacopo thereupon telling him that I resided at Florence, the pope desired him to invite me to return. The purport of this invitation was, that I should enter into

the service of Pope Clement, which would turn out considerably to my advantage. The young gentlemen present were very earnest to know the contents of the letter, which I endeavoured to conceal from them as well as I could; and I wrote to Signor Jacopo, requesting him to send me no more letters, upon any account.

Jacopo, however, growing more officious and obstinate, wrote me a second epistle, couched in such terms, that if it had been discovered, I might have been involved in great difficulty. The substance of it was, that I should repair directly to Rome, where the pope wanted to employ me in affairs of the greatest importance; and that the best course for me to take was to drop all other projects, and not join with a pack of senseless rebels, in acting against his Holiness. When I had perused this letter, I was so much alarmed that I immediately went in quest of my dear friend Pier Landi, who, upon seeing me, asked what had happened that I appeared to be in such disorder. I answered my friend that I could by no means disclose what occasioned my uneasiness; I only begged the favour of him to take my keys, which I put into his hands, and deliver the jewels, with the gold he should find, to the persons whose names were set down in my memorandum-book; and then pack up the furniture of my house, and keep an account of it, with his usual fidelity and friendship; adding that I should, in a few days, let him know what should become of me. Pier Landi, guessing pretty nearly how the matter stood, made answer: "Brother, go your ways without loss of time, and write to me afterwards. Make yourself quite easy about your affairs, and do not give yourself the least concern on that account." I took his advice. This was the most faithful, the most prudent, virtuous, and loving friend that I ever had in my whole life.

CHAPTER IX

After I had retired from Florence, I repaired to Rome, and immediately upon my arrival wrote to my friend Landi. I met with many of my former acquaintance in that city, by whom I was well received, and greatly caressed: however, I lost no time, but set about several works, which proved very lucrative, but were not of sufficient importance to require a particular description. There was an old goldsmith in Rome, named Raffaello del Moro, who had great reputation in his profession, and was moreover an honest man. He requested me to go to work at his shop, because he had some business of consequence upon his hands, which would not fail to turn out to good account: I readily accepted the offer. Ten days had already elapsed before I had seen Jacopo della Barca, who meeting me by chance, accosted me in the most affectionate manner imaginable. Upon his asking me how long I had been there, I answered about a fortnight: at this he was highly offended, telling me that I showed very little respect to a pope who had written for me thrice, in terms the most pressing. I was not at all pleased with his freedom, yet made no reply, suppressing my indignation as well as I could. This person, who was exceedingly loquacious, began to run on at a strange rate; and when I at last perceived that he was tired, I merely said to him that he might conduct me to his Holiness whenever he thought proper. He told me that any time suited him; and I replied that I for my part was always ready.

We bent our course towards the palace (this was on Holy Thursday), and as soon as we arrived at the pope's apartments, he being known, and I expected, were both admitted into his Holiness's presence. The pope being somewhat indisposed, was in bed, attended by Signor Jacopo Salviati and the Archbishop of Capua.

As soon as his Holiness saw me, he was quite overjoyed: I approached him in the most humble manner, kissed his feet, and endeavoured to show by my gestures that I had something of the last importance to communicate. The pope thereupon made a sign with his hand, and Signor Jacopo Salviati and the archbishop retired to a considerable distance from us. I thereupon addressed his Holiness in these terms: "Holy father, ever since this city was sacked, I have not been able to confess or receive the sacrament, because nobody will give me absolution. The case is this: when I melted down the gold in the tower, after labouring so hard to take off the jewels, your Holiness charged the master of the horse to give me some little recompense for my trouble: but I received nothing from him; on the contrary, he loaded me with abusive language. Thus provoked, I went up to the place where I had melted the gold, and removing the ashes, took out about a pound and a half of that metal, in a number of grains, small like millet; and not having sufficient money to bear my charges in my journey home, I thought to apply them to my private use, and afterward make restitution when I should have an opportunity. I am now here at the feet of your Holiness, who are possessed of the full power of absolving, and request you would be so good as to give me permission to confess and communicate, that I may with your favour be restored to the divine grace." The pope, with a faint sigh, perhaps occasioned by the remembrance of his past sorrows, uttered these words: "Benvenuto, I have not the least doubt of the truth of what you say: I have it in my power, and am even willing, to absolve you from any guilt you may have incurred. Therefore freely and with confidence confess the whole; for if you had taken the value of one of those triple crowns, I am ready and willing to pardon you." I then said: "Holy father, I took nothing but what I have mentioned, and it did not amount to above the value of one hundred and forty

ducats; for that was the sum I received for the gold at the mint of Perugia, and I went with it to assist my aged father." The pope replied: "Your father was as virtuous, as good, and worthy a man as ever was born, and you do not in the least degenerate from him. I am very much concerned that you got so little money, but I make you a present of it, whatever it was, and absolve you of any crime you may have committed. Declare this to the confessor, if that be all you require; when you have confessed and communicated, let me see you again; it will be for your interest."

As soon as the pope had dismissed me, Master Jacopo and the Archbishop of Capua came forward. The pope spoke as favourably of me as possible, declaring that he had heard my confession, and given me absolution: he moreover desired the archbishop to send for me to his house, and ask me if there was any other case that troubled my conscience, directing him to give me a thorough absolution; and at the same time to treat me with all possible marks of kindness. This interview being over, little Signor Jacopino had a curiosity to know what long conversation I had had with the pope. After he had asked me this question several times, I made answer that I did not choose to tell him, for it was no concern of his, and he might therefore save himself the trouble of interrogating me any further. I then went to execute all that I had agreed for with the pope; and the two festivals being over, I paid him another visit. His Holiness received me in a still more gracious manner than before, and told me that if I had come a little sooner to Rome I should have been employed in setting the jewels again, which I had taken out of the two crowns at the castle. As that was not, however, a work in which I could gain great reputation, he was resolved, he said, to employ me in an undertaking of the last importance, in which I should have an opportunity of displaying my abilities. "The work," added he, "I mean, is the button for the pontifical cope,

which is made round, and in the form of a large trencher, and sometimes like a small one, half or one third of a cubit wide. In this I would have God the Father represented in half-rilievo, and in the midst of it I would have the fine edge of the large diamond set, with many other jewels of the greatest value. Caradosso began one some time ago, but never finished it: this I would have completed with all speed, for I should be glad to have the pleasure of wearing it a little while myself: go then, and draw a fine design of it." Thereupon he caused all his jewels to be shown me, and I left him, highly pleased with my success.

During the siege of Florence, Federigo Ginori, for whom I made the medal of Atlas, died of a consumption, and it fell into the hands of Signor Luigi Alamanni, who soon after made a present of it to King Francis I., together with some of his admirable writings. His majesty being highly pleased with the medal, the worthy Luigi Alamanni spoke of me in such favourable terms to that monarch that he testified a desire to know me. Being now employed on this little model, I proceeded with the utmost expedition, making it much of the same size as that intended for the work itself. Meanwhile several persons of my profession, who thought themselves equal to such a task, began to stir upon the occasion, and among the rest one Micheletto, who had not been long in Rome, a person noted for his skill in cutting cornelians, and an excellent jeweller. This man was advanced in years, and having acquired a high degree of reputation, was employed in adjusting the pope's double diadem. Finding that I was engaged in designing this model, he expressed great surprise that I had not informed him of the affair, as he was an intelligent man, and in great favour with the pope. At last, perceiving that I did not go near him, he came to my house, and asked me what I was about. I answered that I was busy with a work, which was put into my hands by the pope himself. He replied that he had received orders to

examine the several works then in hand for his Holiness. I told him I would first inquire of the pope, and then I should know what answer to return him. Upon which he said that he would make me repent.

After leaving me in a passion, he had an interview with all the most eminent men in the business; and when they had consulted about the affair, they made choice of Micheletto for their agent. The latter being a man of genius, got certain able designers to draw about thirty models, all different from each other: at the same time knowing the pope to be very ready to listen to his insinuations, he entered into a confederacy against me with another artist, named Pompeo, a Milanese, who was very much in favour with his Holiness, and related to Signor Trajano, first gentleman of the bedchamber, and highly in the pope's good graces. They began to intimate to the pontiff that they had seen my design, and did not think me capable of so great an undertaking. He answered that he would examine into the affair himself, and in case I should not prove equal to the task, he would find a more proper person. They both said that they had got several admirable designs for the purpose; the pope replied "that he was satisfied with what they had done, but did not choose to inspect their designs till I had finished mine, and then he would examine them all together."

In a few days I had completed my model, and carried it one morning to the pope; Signor Trajano made me wait a long while, and in the meantime sent for Micheletto and Pompeo in all haste, desiring them to bring their models with them. As soon as they came, we were all admitted; Micheletto and Pompeo began to show their plans, and the pope to examine them; and because designers unacquainted with the jewelling business do not understand the placing of precious stones, unless those who are practised in the art have taught them the secret (for when a figure is to be set off with jewels, the jeweller must know how to design, otherwise he can produce

nothing good), it happened that all those who had drawn those designs had laid the fine, large, and beautiful diamond in the middle of the breast of God the Father. The pope, who was a person of uncommon genius, having taken notice of this blunder, was highly delighted with his own discovery. After he had inspected about ten, he threw the rest upon the ground, and said: "Let us now see what Benvenuto has got;" desiring me to give him my model, that he might ascertain whether I had committed the same mistake. Thereupon I came forward, and opened a little round box, when instantly there seemed to flash from it a lustre which dazzled the pope himself, and he cried out with a loud voice: "Benvenuto, had you been my very self, you could not have designed this otherwise than you have. Your rivals have done everything they could to disgrace themselves." Several nobles approaching, the pope showed them the difference between the models: and when he had bestowed sufficient praises upon it, and my enemies appeared ready to burst with pride and vexation, he turned about to me and said: "I discover here an inconvenience which is of the utmost consequence; my friend Benvenuto, it is easy to work in wax, the grand difficulty is to execute it in gold." To which I answered boldly: "Most holy father, I will make it my bargain with you, that if I do not execute the work itself in a manner ten times superior to this model, I am to have nothing for my trouble." Upon my uttering these words there was a general outcry, the noblemen affirming that I promised too much. But one of them, who was a great philosopher, said in my favour: "From the admirable symmetry of shape, and happy physiognomy of this young man, I venture to engage that he will perform all he promises, and more." The pope replied: "I am of the same opinion;" then calling to Trajano, his gentleman of the bedchamber, he ordered him to fetch five hundred ducats.

Whilst they were bringing the money, he examined

more minutely the ingenious artifice by which I had placed that fine diamond, and God the Father, in a proper position. I had laid the diamond exactly in the middle of the work, and over it I had represented God the Father sitting in a sort of a free, easy attitude, which suited admirably well with the rest of the piece, and did not in the least crowd the diamond; His right hand was lifted up, giving His blessing. Under the diamond I had drawn three little boys, who supported it with their arms raised aloft. One of these boys, which stood in the middle, was in full, the other two in half, rilievo. Round it were several figures of boys placed amongst other glittering jewels. The remainder of God the Father was covered with a mantle, which waved in the wind, from whence issued several figures of boys, with other striking ornaments, most beautiful to behold. This work was made of a white stucco upon a black stone. When the officer brought the money, the pope gave it to me with his own hand, and in the most obliging manner requested me to endeavour to finish it before he died, promising me that I should find my account in it.

Having taken leave of his Holiness, I went home with the money and the model, and was in the utmost impatience to begin the work. I set about it with the greatest assiduity, and in a week's time the pope sent one of his gentlemen of the bedchamber, a native of Bologna, and of great distinction, to desire I would repair to him directly, and carry my work along with me. By the way, the gentleman of the bedchamber, who was one of the politest persons at court, told me that the pope not only wanted to see how far I had advanced in that undertaking, but likewise intended to employ me in another business of great importance, which was the stamping of the coins in the Roman mint; desiring me at the same time to be in readiness to answer his Holiness, for he had given me previous notice, that I might not be unprepared. I waited upon his Holiness, and showed him the golden

plate, upon which was engraved God the Father alone; which figure, even in this sketch, discovered a degree of perfection greatly superior to the model of wax. The pope exclaimed with astonishment: "From this time I will believe whatever you say." After several other declarations in my favour, he added: "I propose employing you in another work, which you will be as much pleased with as this, or rather more, if you have but the spirit to undertake it;" then telling me that he would be glad to have his coins struck, he desired to know whether I had ever done anything in that way, and had the courage to engage in such a work. I answered that I was very ready to accept of it, and that I had seen how it was done, though I had never been employed in that business.

There was present at this conversation, Signor Tommaso da Prato, datary to his Holiness; this man, being greatly attached to my enemies, said, upon the occasion: "Holy father, the favours which you lavish upon this young man, and his own presumption, would make him promise you a new creation; but as you have put a work of vast importance into his hands, and now are giving him another of still greater, the consequence must be that one will interfere with the other." The pope turned about to him in an indignant mood, and bade him mind his own business. He then ordered me to make him a model of a broad piece of gold, upon which he wished to have engraved a naked Christ with His hands tied behind Him, and the words *Ecce Homo*, as a legend; with a reverse, on which should be represented a pope and an emperor together, fixing up a cross, which should appear to be falling, with these words inscribed, *Unus spiritus et una fides erat in eis.* The pope having employed me to stamp this fine medal, Bandinello, the sculptor, who was not yet made a knight, came forward, and with his usual presumption and ignorance, said, before all present: "These goldsmiths must have some person to draw the designs of these fine pieces for them." I immediately turned about

and told him that I did not want his drawing in my business; but that I hoped by my skill and designs in a short time to give him some uneasiness with respect to his own professional reputation. The pope seemed to be highly pleased with what I said, and addressing himself to me, said: "Go, my dear Benvenuto, exert your utmost efforts to serve me, and never mind these blockheads." So having taken my leave, I, with great expedition, made two dies; and having stamped a piece of gold, I carried both the money and dies to the pope one Sunday after dinner. He then said his surprise was equal to his satisfaction; and though the execution pleased him highly, he was still more amazed at my expedition.

In order to increase his satisfaction and surprise, I had brought with me all the old coins which had formerly been struck by those able artists who had been in the service of Pope Julius and Pope Leo; and seeing that mine gained much higher approbation, I took a petition out of my bosom, requesting to be made stamp-master to the mint, the salary annexed to which place was six gold crowns a month; besides that the dies were afterwards paid for by the superintendent of the mint, who for three gave a ducat. The pope having approved of my request, charged the datary to make out my commission; the latter, who had views of his own, and wanted to be a gainer by the affair, said: "Holy father, do not so precipitate matters; things of this nature require mature deliberation." The pontiff replied: "I know what you would be at; give me that petition directly." Having taken it, he instantly signed it, and putting it into the hand of the datary, said: "Now you have no further objections to make, draw up the commission directly, for such is my pleasure; the very shoes of Benvenuto are more precious than the eyes of all those blunderers." So having thanked his Holiness, with the warmest sentiments of gratitude, I returned overjoyed to my work.

CHAPTER X

I CONTINUED still to work in the shop of Raffaello del Moro. This worthy man had a handsome young daughter, respecting whom he formed a design on me; and I having partly discovered his views, felt well disposed to second them: I kept, however, my own counsel; but was so discreet and circumspect that her father was highly pleased with my behaviour. This girl was attacked by a disorder in her right hand, which corroded the two bones belonging to the little finger and the one next to it. Through the inadvertency of her father, she had fallen into the hands of an ignorant quack, who declared it as his opinion that she would lose her right arm, if no worse were to befall her. I seeing her father terribly frightened, desired him not to mind what was said by that ignorant pretender; he told me that he had no acquaintance either with physicians or surgeons, and requested me to recommend him a skilful person, if I knew any such: I then sent for one Signor Jacopo of Perugia, an eminent surgeon. As soon as he had seen the poor frightened girl, and been informed of what the ignorant quack had said, he affirmed that she was in no danger, but that she would have the full use of her right hand, though her two last fingers might remain somewhat weak; therefore her father need not be under the least apprehension. As he had undertaken the cure, and was preparing to cut off part of the diseased flesh about the two little bones, her father called me, and desired that I would myself be a spectator of the operation.

Having observed that Signor Jacopo was making use of some clumsy instruments, with which he hurt the girl very much, and did her no manner of good, I bade him wait for about eight minutes, and proceed no further. I then ran to my shop, and made a little instrument of the finest

steel, which I delivered to the surgeon, who continued his operation with so gentle a hand that the patient did not feel the least pain, and the affair was soon over. Upon this and many other accounts the worthy man conceived so warm a friendship for me that he seemed to love me better than his two sons, who were grown young men, and applied his whole attention to the recovery of his fair daughter.

He was very intimate with Signor Giovanni Gaddi, who was a clerk of the chamber, and had a great attachment to the fine arts, though no artist himself. He was also connected with Signor Giovanni Greco, a person of the most profound erudition; with Signor Luigi da Fano, who was likewise a man of letters; with Signor Antonio Allegretti, and Signor Annibal Caro, a young man from a distant part of Italy. I became a member of this society, in conjunction with Signor Bastiano, a Venetian, and excellent painter; and we almost every day saw each other once at least at the house of Signor Giovanni. This intimacy having given the worthy Signor Raffaello an opportunity, he said to the other: "My good friend, Signor Giovanni, you know me very well; as it is my intention to give my daughter in marriage to Benvenuto, I am not acquainted with a fitter person to apply to upon this occasion than yourself; I therefore request you to assist me in settling on her what portion out of my property he wishes to have." The shallow fellow scarcely let the worthy man make an end of speaking, when he cried out, without the least hesitation: "Say no more, Signor Raffaello. What you propose is a thing utterly impracticable." The poor man, much mortified, sought to marry his daughter without loss of time, as the mother and all the relations were highly offended. I was entirely ignorant of the cause, and thinking they made me a very bad return for all my politeness, endeavoured to open a shop hard by them. Signor Giovanni said nothing to me of what had passed, till the girl was married, which happened a few months after.

I attached myself with the most unremitting application to my work, which I was in the utmost haste to finish, and likewise attended to my business at the Mint, when the pope set me to make a piece equal in value to two carlins, upon which was his Holiness's head, on the reverse, Christ walking upon the sea, and stretching out His hands to St. Peter, with this inscription round it, *Quare dubitasti?* This piece gave such high satisfaction that a certain secretary to the pope, a man of great worth, whose name was Sanga, said on the occasion: "Your Holiness may boast of having a coin superior to that of the Roman emperors, amidst all their pomp and magnificence." The pope made answer: "Benvenuto may also boast of serving a prince like me, who knows his merit." I continued my grand work in gold, frequently showing it to the pope, who was very earnest to see it, and every day expressed new admiration at the performance.

A brother of mine was at this time in Rome, in the service of Duke Alessandro, for whom the pope had procured the duchy of Penna; in the same service were also a considerable number of gallant men, trained in the school of that great prince, Giovanni de' Medici; and my brother was esteemed by the duke as one of the bravest of the whole corps. Happening one day, after dinner, to be in the part of the town called Banchi, at the shop of Baccino della Croce, to which all those brave fellows resorted, he had laid himself down upon a bench, and was overcome with sleep. At this time there passed by a company of city-guards, having in their custody one Captain Cisti, a Lombard, who had been bred likewise in the school of the same great Signor Giovanni, but was not then in the service of the duke. Captain Cattivanza degli Strozzi, happening to be in the shop of Baccino della Croce, Captain Cisti saw him, and immediately cried out: "I was bringing you that large sum of money which I owed you: if you want it, come for it, before they carry me to gaol." This Cattivanza was very ready to put the

courage of others to the proof, but did not care to run any risk himself; and as some gallant youths were present, who were willing to undertake this hazardous enterprise, though scarce strong enough for it, he desired them to advance towards Captain Cisti, in order to get the money from him, and, in case the guards made any resistance, to overpower them if necessary. These young men were only four in number, all of them beardless: the first was Bertino Aldobrandi, the second Anguillotto da Lucca. I cannot recollect the names of the rest. Bertino had been pupil to my brother, who was beyond measure attached to him. These four bold young men came up to the city-guards, who were above fifty in number, pikemen, musqueteers, and two-handed swordmen. After a few words they drew their swords, and the four youths pressed the guards so hard, that if Captain Cattivanza had only just shown himself a little, even without drawing his sword, they would inevitably have put their adversaries to flight; but as the latter made a stand for a while, Bertino received some dangerous wounds, which brought him to the ground. Anguillotto, too, at the same time, was wounded in his right arm, and being so far disabled that he could not hold his sword, he retreated in the best way he could; whereupon the others followed his example. Bertino was taken up in a dangerous condition.

During this transaction we were all at table, having dined about an hour later than usual; upon hearing of the disturbance, the eldest of the young men rose from table to go and see the scuffle: his name was Giovanni. I said to him: "For God's sake do not stir from hence, for in such affairs as this the loss is always certain, and there is nothing to be gained." His father spoke to him to the same effect, begging he would not leave the room. The youth, without minding a word that was said to him, instantly ran downstairs. Being come to the place where the grand confusion was, and seeing Bertino raised from the ground, he began to turn back, when he met with my

brother Cecchino, who asked him the cause of this quarrel. Giovanni, though warned by some persons not to tell the affair to Cecchino, cried out foolishly and indiscreetly, that Bertino Aldobrandi had been murdered by the city-guards. At this my brother set up a loud howl, which might be heard ten miles off, and said to Giovanni: "Alas! unhappy wretch that I am: can you tell me which of them it was that killed him?" Giovanni made answer that it was one who wore a large two-handed sword, with a blue feather in his hat. My poor brother having followed the guards, and knowing the person by the mark he had been told of, fell upon the murderer with great agility and bravery, and in spite of all resistance ran his sword through his body, pushing him with the hilt of it to the ground. He then assailed the rest with such intrepidity that he alone and unassisted would have put all the guards to flight; but unluckily turning about to attack a musqueteer, the latter finding himself obliged to fire in his own defence, hit the valiant but unfortunate youth just above the right knee, which brought him to the ground; whereupon the guards made haste to retreat, lest some other formidable champion should fly to his assistance.

Finding the tumult continue, I likewise rose from the table, and putting on my sword, as swords were then worn by everybody, I repaired to the bridge of St. Angelo, where I saw a great concourse of people. I advanced up to the crowd, and as I was known to some of them, room was made for me, when they showed me what I by no means was pleased to see, though I had discovered a great curiosity to inquire into the matter. At my first coming up I did not know my brother, for he was dressed in different clothes from those I had seen him in a short time before: but he knew me first, and said: "Dear brother, do not be afflicted at my misfortune: it is what I, from my condition of life, foresaw and expected: get me quickly removed from this place, for I have but

few hours to live." After he had related to me the accident that had befallen him, with all the brevity that such cases require, I answered him: "Brother, this is the greatest misfortune that could happen to me in this world; but have a good heart, for before you die you shall see me revenge your much-lamented fate." The city-guard was about fifty paces distant from us: Maffio their captain having caused part of them to return, in order to carry off the corporal, whom my brother had slain, I walked up to them with the utmost speed, wrapped and muffled up in my cloak; and as I had forced my way through the crowd and was come up to Maffio, I should certainly have put him to death; but when I had drawn my sword half out of the scabbard, there came behind me Berlinghieri, a gallant youth, and my particular friend; and with him four brave young men, who said to Maffio: "Fly instantly, for this man will kill you!" Maffio having asked them who I was, they answered: "He is the brother of him you see lying there." Not choosing to hear anything further, he retired with the utmost precipitation to the tower of Nona: the others then said to me: "Benvenuto, the hindrance we have been to you, however disagreeable, was intended for a good end. Let us now go to the assistance of the dying man." So we turned back, and went to my brother, whom I ordered to be removed to a neighbouring house.

A consultation of surgeons being immediately called in, they dressed his wound, but he would not hear of having his leg cut off, though it would have been the likeliest way to save his life. As soon as they had done, Duke Alessandro made his appearance, and spoke to my brother with great tenderness: the latter being still in his right mind, said to his excellency: "My dear lord, there is nothing I am grieved at but that you are going to lose a servant, who may be surpassed by others in courage and abilities, but will never be equalled for his fidelity and attachment to your person." The duke desired he would

endeavour to live, declaring that he knew him to be in all respects a valiant and worthy man: he then turned about to his people and bid them supply the youth with whatever he wanted. No sooner was the duke departed, but the overflowing of blood, which could not be stanched, affected my brother's brain, insomuch that he became the next night delirious. The only sign of understanding he discovered was, that when they brought the sacrament to him, he said: "You would have done well to make me begin with confessing my sins: it does not become me to receive that Divine sacrament with this crazy and disordered frame. Let it be sufficient that my eyes behold it with a profound adoration; it will be received by my immortal soul, and that alone supplicates the Deity for mercy and pardon." When he made an end of these words, and the sacrament was carried away, his delirium returned again. His ravings consisted of the greatest abominations, the strangest frenzies, and the most horrid words that could possibly come from the mouth of man; and thus he continued during the whole night, and till next day. No sooner had the sun appeared on the horizon than he turned to me and said: "Brother, I do not choose to stay here any longer, for these people might make me commit some extravagant action, which would cause them to repent having any way molested me;" then disengaging both his legs, which we had put into a box, he made an effort as if he was going to mount on horseback, and turning his face about to me, he said three times, "Adieu, adieu, adieu!" At the last word his generous soul departed. The hour for the funeral being come, which was about two hours before sunset, I got him honourably interred in the church of the Florentines; and afterwards caused a fine marble monument to be erected over him, on which were represented certain trophies and standards. I must not omit that one of his friends having asked him who it was that shot him, and whether he should know him again, he answered in the affirmative, and told him all the marks by

which he might be distinguished; and though he took the utmost care to conceal this declaration from me, I overheard all that passed, and intend in a proper place to give the sequel of that adventure.

To return to the tomb-stone above mentioned: certain literati of the first rank who were well acquainted with my brother, and greatly admired his prowess, gave me an epitaph for him, telling me that so brave a youth well deserved it. It was as follows:—

"Francisco Cellino Florentino, qui quod in teneris annis ad Johannem Medicem ducem plures victorias retulit, et signifier fuit, facile documentum dedit quantæ fortitudinis et consilii vir futurus erat, ni crudelis fati archibuso transfossus quinto ætatis lustro jacerit. Benvenutus frater posuit. Obiit die 27 Maii, MDXXIX."

He was twenty-five years of age; and though in the army he was called Cecchino the musician's son, I chose to give him our family name, with the arms of Cellini. This name I ordered to be carved in the finest antique characters, all of which were represented broken except the first and last. Being asked the reason of this by the literati who had written the epitaph for me, I told them that the letters were represented broken, because his corporeal frame was destroyed; and those two letters, namely, the first and last, were preserved entire—the first in allusion to that glorious present, which God has made us, of a soul enlightened by His Divine rays, subject to no injury; the last on account of the great renown of his brave actions. This device met with general approbation, and the method was afterwards adopted by others. I caused the arms of Cellini to be wrought upon the same tomb-stone, in which I made some little alteration; for there are in Ravenna, a very ancient city, some of the Cellini family, who are respectable gentlemen, and have for their arms a lion rampant of the colour of gold, in an

azure field, with a red lily upon the right paw, and three little gold lilies upon the basis. This is the true coat of arms of our family; my father showed me one which contained only the paw with the remaining particulars already described; but that of the Cellini of Ravenna pleases me most. To return to the devices which I ordered to be made for the monument, and to the arms in particular: the paw of the lion was represented upon it, and in the room of the lily I caused an axe to be placed in the paw, with a field of the said arms divided in four quarters, with no other view but to remind me of revenging his injured manes.

Meanwhile I exerted my utmost efforts to finish the work in gold which I was employed in by Pope Clement: his Holiness was very earnest to have it completed, and sent for me two or three times a week to observe my progress. He was more and more pleased with it every time, but frequently found fault with the deep sorrow which I expressed for the loss of my brother. Seeing me one day more dejected than usual, he said to me: "Benvenuto, I did not think that you were so weak a man; did you never know that death is unavoidable? You seem to want to follow your brother." I took my leave of his Holiness, and went on with the work which he had put into my hands, as well as the business of the Mint; still thinking, day and night, of the musqueteer that shot my brother.

He had formerly been in the light cavalry, and afterwards entered as a musqueteer amongst the city-guards. What increased my vexation and resentment was that he made his boasts in these terms: "If I had not despatched that bold youth, he alone would quickly have made us fly, which would have been an eternal disgrace." Perceiving that my solicitude and anxious desire of revenge deprived me both of sleep and appetite, which threw me into a lingering disorder, and not regarding the baseness of the undertaking, one evening I prepared to put an end to my

inquietude. This musqueteer lived hard by a place called Torre Sanguigna, next door to a house occupied by a courtesan, whose name was Signora Antea, one of the richest and most admired, and who made the greatest figure of any of her profession in Rome. Just after sunset, about eight o'clock, as this musqueteer stood at his door with his sword in his hand, when he had done supper, I, with great address, came close to him with a long dagger, and gave him a violent back-handed stroke, which I had aimed at his neck. He instantly turned round, and the blow falling directly upon his left shoulder, broke the whole bone of it, upon which he dropped his sword, quite overcome by the pain, and took to his heels. I pursued, and in four steps came up with him, when, raising the dagger over his head, which he lowered down, I hit him exactly upon the nape of the neck. The weapon penetrated so deep, that though I made a great effort to recover it again, I found it impossible; for at this same instant there issued out of Antea's house four soldiers with their swords drawn, so that I was obliged to draw mine also in my own defence.

Having left the dagger, I retired, and for fear of a discovery repaired to the palace of Duke Alessandro, which was between the Piazza Navona and the Rotonda. I immediately acquainted his excellency with what had happened, who told me that if I had been alone upon the occasion, I might make myself quite easy, and be under no apprehensions. He bid me at the same time proceed in the business I had undertaken for his Holiness, who was impatient to see it finished, and gave me leave to work there eight days. He was the more ready to protect me, as the soldiers who had interrupted me related the whole affair as it happened, mentioning the great difficulty with which they had drawn the dagger out of the neck of the wounded person, who was entirely unknown to them. But Giovanni Bandini happening to pass that way, told them that the dagger belonged to him, and he had lent it to Benvenuto, who wanted to revenge the death of his brother.

The soldiers expressed great concern at their having interposed, though I had taken my revenge to the full.

More than eight days passed without the pope's once sending for me according to his usual custom; at last he ordered the Bolognese gentleman of his bedchamber to call upon me, who, with great modesty, said that the pope knew all that had happened, that his Holiness was very much my friend, and desired me to go on with my business, without giving myself any uneasiness. When I came into the presence of the pontiff, he frowned upon me very much, and with angry looks seemed to reprimand me; but, upon viewing my performance, his countenance grew serene, and he praised me highly, telling me that I had done a great deal in a short time; then looking attentively at me, he said: "Now that you have recovered your health, Benvenuto, take care of yourself." I understood his meaning, and told him that I should not neglect his advice. I opened a fine shop in the place called Banchi, opposite to Raffaello, and there I finished the work which I had in hand. The pope soon after having sent me all the jewels except the diamond, which he had pawned to certain Genoese bankers in order to supply some particular necessities, I took possession of all the rest, but had only the model of the diamond.

I kept five able journeymen, and besides the pope's business did several other jobs, insomuch that the shop contained different wares in jewels, gold, and silver, to a very considerable amount. I had in the house a fine large shock-dog, which Duke Alessandro had made me a present of: it was an admirable good retriever, for it would bring me all sorts of birds, and other animals that I shot with my gun; and it was an excellent house-dog besides. It happened about this period (as my time of life permitted, being then only in my twenty-ninth year), that having taken into my service a young woman equally genteel and beautiful, I made use of her as a model in my art of drawing; and it was not long before our intimacy assumed an amorous character. My chamber was situated at a con-

siderable distance from that of my work-people, and also from my shop; and although, in general, no man's sleep is lighter than mine, it, upon some occasions, is very profound and heavy.

It happened one night that a thief, who had been at my house, pretending to be a goldsmith, and had laid a plan to rob me of the above-mentioned jewels, watched his opportunity and broke into my shop, where he found several small wares in gold and silver; but as he was breaking open the caskets, in order to come at the jewels, the dog flew at him, and the thief found it a difficult matter to defend himself with a sword. The faithful animal ran several times about the house, entering the journeymen's rooms, which were open, it being then summer-time; but as they did not seem to hear him barking, he drew away the bedclothes, and pulling the men alternately by the arms, forcibly awakened them; then barking very loud, he showed the way to the thief, and went on before; but they would not follow him. The scoundrels being quite provoked with the noise of the dog, began to throw stones and sticks at him (which they found an easy matter, as I had given them orders to keep a light in their room the whole night), and at last locked their door. The dog, having lost all hopes of the assistance of these rascals, undertook the task alone, and ran downstairs. He could not find the villain in the shop, but came up with him in the street, and tearing off his cloak, would certainly have treated him according to his deserts, if the fellow had not called to some tailors in the neighbourhood, and begged, for the love of God, they would assist him against a mad dog. The tailors, giving credit to what he said, came to his assistance, and with great difficulty drove away the poor animal. Next morning, when my young men went down into the shop, they saw it broken open, and all the caskets rifled; upon which they began to make a loud outcry, and I coming to them quite terrified, they said: "Alas, we are undone; the shop

has been plundered and robbed by a villain, who has carried off everything valuable, and broken all the caskets." Such an effect had these words upon my mind that I had not the heart to go to the chest to see whether the pope's jewels were safe; but being quite shocked at the report, and scarce able to trust my own eyes, I bid them open it, and see whether his Holiness's jewels were missing. When the young men, who were both in their shirts, found all the pope's jewels, as likewise the work in gold, they were overjoyed, and said: "There is no harm done, since both the work and the jewels are untouched. The thief, however, has stripped us to our shirts; for, as the heat was excessive last night, we undressed in the shop, and there left our clothes." Hearing this, I perfectly recovered my spirits, and desired them to provide themselves with clothes, as I would pay for whatever damage had been done.

When I heard the whole affair at my leisure, what gave me most concern, and had thrown me into great confusion at opening the chest, was my apprehension lest I should be thought to have invented this story of the thief, merely with a design to rob the pope of his jewels. Besides, it had been said to Pope Clement, by one of his greatest confidants, and others, namely, Francesco del Nero, Zanni di Biliotti, his accountant, the Bishop of Vaison, &c., that they were surprised how his Holiness could trust such a quantity of jewels with a wild young man, who was more a soldier than an artist, and not yet quite thirty. The pope asked them whether they had ever known me guilty of anything that could justly give room for suspicion. "Most holy father," answered Francesco del Nero, his treasurer, "I have not, for he never had any such opportunity before." To this the pope replied: "I take him to be an honest man in every respect, and if I thought him otherwise, I should not trust him." This suddenly recurring to my memory, gave me all the uneasiness I have described above.

As soon as I had ordered my journeymen to go and get themselves new clothes, I took both the work and the jewels, and putting them in their places as well as I could, went directly to the pope, who had been told something of the adventure of my shop by Francesco del Nero. The pope thereupon conceiving a sudden suspicion, and giving me a most stern look, said with a harsh tone of voice: "What are you come hither about? What's the matter?" To this I answered: "Holy father, here are all your jewels and the gold: there is nothing missing." His Holiness, with a serene brow, said, in allusion to my name: "Then are you indeed *welcome*." I showed him my work, and whilst he was examining it, told him the whole affair of the thief, the dilemma I had been in, and what had been the chief cause of my uneasiness. At these words he frequently looked me full in the face, in the presence of Francesco del Nero, seeming to be half sorry that his surmise had been incorrect. At last the pope turning all he had heard into merriment, said: "Go and continue to show yourself an honest man: I know you deserve that character."

CHAPTER XI

Whilst I continued to go on with the work, and at the same time did business for the Mint, certain false coins impressed with my dies appeared in Rome, which my enemies immediately carried to the pope, endeavouring to fill him with new suspicions to my prejudice. The pope ordered Jacopo Balducci, master of the Mint, to use his utmost endeavours to discover the offender, that my innocence might be manifest to the whole world. This treacherous man being my sworn enemy, said: "God send, most holy father, that it may turn out as you say, and that we may have the good fortune to detect the criminal." The pope thereupon turned about to the

Governor of Rome, and ordered him to exert all his diligence to discover the delinquent. At the same time his Holiness sent for me, and with great art and address entering upon the affair of the false coins, said: "Benvenuto, do you think you could find in your heart to make counterfeit money?" I answered that "I thought myself much better able to counterfeit coins than the low fellows that were generally guilty of that crime: for," added I, "the men who commit such offences are not persons of any great genius that can gain much by their business. Now, if I with my slender abilities make such profits that I have always money to spare (for when I made the dies for the Mint I every day before dinner gained at least three crowns, so much being always paid me for those instruments; but the stupid master of the Mint hated me, because he fain would have reduced them to a lower price), what I gain with the favour of God and man is enough for me, without resorting to the infamous and less profitable trade of false coining." The pope gave a particular attention to what I said, and though he had previously ordered that care should be taken to prevent my quitting Rome, he now commanded his attendants to make a diligent inquiry after the delinquent, but to take no further notice of me, lest I should be offended, and he might perhaps lose me. Certain ecclesiastics having made a proper inquiry, soon discovered the criminal. He was a stamper of the Mint, named Cesare Maccheroni, a Roman citizen, and with him was taken another officer belonging to the Mint.

Happening just about this time to pass by the square of Navona with my fine shock-dog, as soon as I came to the door of the city marshal, the dog barked very loudly and flew at a young man, who had been arrested by one Donnino, a goldsmith of Parma, formerly a disciple of Caradosso, upon suspicion of having committed a robbery. My dog made such efforts to tear this young fellow to pieces that he roused the city-guards. The prisoner asserted his

innocence boldly, and Donnino did not say so much as he ought to have done, especially as I was present. There happened likewise to be by one of the chief officers of the city-guards, who was a Genoese, and well acquainted with the prisoner's father; insomuch that on account of the violence offered by the dog, and for other reasons, they were for dismissing the youth, as if he had been innocent. As soon as I came up, the dog, which dreaded neither swords nor sticks, again flew at the young man. The guards told me that if I did not keep off my dog they would kill it. I called off the dog with some difficulty, and as the young man was retiring, certain little paper bundles fell from under the cape of his cloak, which Donnino immediately discovered to belong to him. Amongst them I perceived a little ring which I knew to be my property: whereupon I said: "This is the villain that broke open my shop, and my dog knows him again." I therefore let the dog loose, and he once more seized the thief, who then implored my mercy, and told me he would restore me whatever he had of mine. On this I again called off my dog, and the fellow returned me all the gold, silver, and rings that he had robbed me of, and gave me five-and-twenty crowns over, imploring my forgiveness. I bade him pray for the Divine mercy, as I, for my part, did not intend to do him either harm or good. I then returned to my business, and in a few days after, Cesare Maccheroni the forger was hanged in the quarter called Banchi, opposite to the gate of the Mint: his accomplice was sent to the galleys. The Genoese thief was hanged in the Campo di Fiore, and I remained possessed of a greater reputation for probity than ever.

When I had at last finished my work, there happened a great inundation, which overflowed the whole city. As I was waiting the issue, the day being far spent, the waters began to increase. The fore part of my house and shop was in the quarter of Banchi, and the back part jutted out several cubits towards Monte Giordano. Making the pre-

servation of my life my first care, and my honour the next, I put all my jewels in my pockets, left my work in gold under the care of my journeymen, and taking off my shoes and stockings, went out at a back window, and waded through the water as well as I could, till I reached Monte Cavallo. There I found Signor Giovanni Gaddi, a clerk of the chamber, and Bastiano, the Venetian painter. Accosting Signor Giovanni, I gave him all my jewels to take care of, knowing he had as great a regard for me as if I had been his brother. A few days after, the waters having subsided, I returned to my shop, and finished my work with the help of God and by my own industry so happily, that it was looked upon as the most exquisite performance of the kind that had ever been seen in Rome. Upon carrying it to the pope, I thought he would never have been tired of praising it. "If I were a great and opulent emperor," said he, "I would give my friend Benvenuto as much land as his eye could take in; but as I am only a poor little potentate, I will endeavour to make such a provision for him, as will satisfy his moderate desires." After the pope had made an end of his rodomontade, I asked him for a mace-bearer's place which was just then become vacant: he made answer that it was his intention to give me a much more considerable employ. I again desired his Holiness to grant me that other trifling post by way of earnest. He replied, with a laugh, that he was willing to gratify me, but did not choose I should serve with the common mace-bearers. He advised me therefore to make it my agreement with them to be exempt from attendance; and to get me excused, he would grant them a favour, for which they had applied to him, viz. to be allowed to demand their salaries by authority: which was accordingly done. This place of mace-bearer brought me to the amount of above two hundred crowns a year.

Whilst I continued in the service of the pope, sometimes employed by him in one way, sometimes in another, he

ordered me to draw a fine chalice for him; and I accordingly sketched out a design and model of such a cup. This model was of wood and wax; instead of the boss of the chalice, I had made three little figures of a pretty considerable size, representing Faith, Hope, and Charity: upon the foot of it, I represented the stories relative to those figures on three bosses in basso rilievo: on one was the nativity of Christ, on another the resurrection, on a third St. Peter crucified with his head downwards—for in that attitude I was ordered to draw him.

During the progress of this work, the pope several times desired to see it; but finding that his Holiness had quite forgotten to give me any preferment, the place of one of the fraternity del Piombo (the seal-office) being vacant, I one evening asked him for it. The good pope, no longer recollecting the florid harangue he had made upon my finishing the other work, answered me thus: "The place you ask has annexed to it a salary of above eight hundred crowns a year, so that if you were to have it you would think of nothing afterwards but indulging yourself, and pampering your body; thus you would entirely forget that admirable art, of which you are at present so great a master, and I should be condemned as the cause of it." I instantly replied, "that good cats mouse better to fatten themselves, than merely through hunger; and that men of genius exert their abilities always to most purpose when they are in affluent circumstances; insomuch that those princes, who are most munificent to such men, may be considered as encouraging, and, as it were, watering the plants of genius: left to themselves they wither and die away—it is encouragement alone that makes them spring up and flourish. I must however inform your Holiness," added I, "that I did not petition for this preferment expecting to have it granted me; I looked upon myself as happy, getting the poor place of mace-bearer: it was only a transient thought that just came into my head. You will do well to bestow it upon

some man of genius that deserves it, and not upon an ignorant person, who will make no other use of it but to pamper his body, as your Holiness expresses it. Take example of Pope Julius, of worthy memory, who gave such a place to Bramante, an ingenious architect." Having spoken thus I made him a low bow, and took my leave.

Bastiano, the Venetian painter, then coming forward, said to him: "Most holy father, please to give this place to some person that exerts himself in the ingenious arts; and as your Holiness knows me to have dedicated my time to those studies, I humbly request you would think me worthy of that honour." The pope made answer: "This devil Benvenuto cannot bear a word of rebuke: I did intend to bestow the place upon him; but it is not right to behave so proudly to a pope: I therefore do not know how I shall dispose of it." The Bishop of Vaison, suddenly coming forward, took Bastiano's part, and said: "Most holy father, Benvenuto is a young man, the sword becomes him much better than the monk's habit: please your Holiness to bestow it upon this ingenious man, Bastiano, and you may give Benvenuto some other lucrative place which will suit him better." The pope then turning about to Signor Bartolomeo Valori, said to him: "When you meet Benvenuto tell him that he himself was the cause of the place he applied for being given to Bastiano, the painter; and that he may depend upon it, he shall have the first lucrative post that becomes vacant: in the meantime desire him to exert himself and finish my business."

The evening following, at two hours after sunset, I happened to meet Signor Bartolomeo Valori hard by the Mint, as he was driving on precipitately with two torches before him, being sent for by the pope: upon my bowing to him, he called out to me, and in the most friendly manner told me all that his Holiness had said. I answered that I would finish the work I had in hand with greater diligence than I had shown on any other occasion,

but without hopes of being recompensed by his Holiness. Signor Bartolomeo thereupon reprimanded me, adding that I should not receive the offers of a pope in that manner. I replied that if I were to depend upon such promises before they took effect, I should be a fool; and so I went about my business. Signor Bartolomeo doubtless informed the pope of my bold answer, and in all probability added something to it; for it was two months before his Holiness sent for me, and during all that time I would not go to court upon any account.

At length the pope, becoming quite impatient for my finishing the chalice, gave orders to Signor Roberto Pucci to inquire what progress I had made. This worthy man every day paid me a visit, and constantly said something kind and obliging to me, which I returned with the like courtesy. His Holiness being upon the point of leaving Rome to go to Bologna, when he found that I never thought of going near him, sent off of his own accord Signor Roberto to desire me to bring my work, for he wanted to see how far I had proceeded. I took it with me, and showed his Holiness that the most important part of the work was finished, but requested him to advance me five hundred crowns, partly on account, and partly to buy some more gold, which was wanting to complete the chalice. The pope said: "Make haste and finish it." I answered in going away: "That I would obey him, if he would leave me money," and so took my leave.

The pope set out for Bologna, leaving Cardinal Salviati his legate in Rome, and ordered him to hurry me on with the work, expressing himself in these words: "Benvenuto is a man that sets but little value upon his abilities, and less upon me; so be sure you hurry him on, that the chalice may be finished at my return." This stupid cardinal sent to me in about eight days, ordering me to bring my work with me; but I went to him without it. As soon as I came into his presence, he said to me: "Where is this fantastical work of yours? Have you finished it?"

I answered: "Most reverend sir, I have not finished my fantastical work, as you are pleased to call it, nor can I finish it, unless you give me wherewithal to enable me." Scarce had I uttered these words, when the cardinal, whose physiognomy was more like that of an ass than a human creature, began to look more hideous than before, and immediately proceeding to abusive language, said: "I'll confine you on board of a galley, and then you will be glad to finish the work." As I had a brute to deal with, I used the language proper to the occasion, which was as follows: "My lord, when I shall be guilty of crimes deserving the galleys, then you may send me thither; but for such an offence as mine, I am not afraid. Nay, I will tell you more; on account of this ill treatment, I will not finish the work at all; so send no more for me, for I will not come, unless I am dragged hither by the city-guards." The foolish cardinal then tried by fair means to persuade me to go on with the work in hand, and to bring what I had done, that he might examine it. In answer to all his persuasions, I said: "Tell the Bishop to send me the materials if he would have me finish this fantastical work;" nor would I give him any other answer, insomuch that despairing of success, he at last ceased to trouble me with his importunities.

The pope returned from Bologna, and immediately inquired after me, for the cardinal had already given him by letter the most unfavourable account of me he possibly could. His Holiness being incensed against me to the highest degree, ordered me to come to him with my work, and I obeyed. During the time he was at Bologna, I had so severe an inflammation of my eyes, that life became almost insupportable to me, which was the first cause of my not proceeding with the chalice. So much did I suffer by this disorder, that I really thought I should lose my eyesight; and I had computed how much would be sufficient for my support when I should be blind. In my way to the palace I meditated within myself an

excuse for discontinuing the work, and thought that whilst the pope was considering and examining my performance, I might acquaint him with my case; but I was mistaken, for as soon as I appeared in his presence he said to me, with many unbecoming words: "Let me see that work of yours: is it finished?" Upon my producing it he flew into a more violent passion than before, and said: "As there is truth in God, I assure you, since you value no living soul, that if a regard to decency did not prevent me, I would order both you and your work to be thrown this moment out of the window." Seeing the pope thus transformed to a savage beast, I was for quitting his presence directly; and, as he continued his bravadoes, I put the chalice under my cloak, muttering these words to myself: "The whole world would prove unable to make a blind man proceed in such an undertaking as this." The pope, then, with a louder voice than before, said: "Come hither: what is that you say?" For a while I hesitated, whether I should not run downstairs. At last I plucked up my courage, and, falling on my knees, exclaimed as loud as I could (because he continued to bawl): "Is it reasonable that when I am become blind with a disorder, you should oblige me to continue to work?" He answered: "You could see well enough to come hither, and I don't believe one word of what you say." Observing that he spoke with a milder tone of voice, I replied: "If your Holiness will ask your physician, you will find that I declare the truth."—"I shall inquire into the affair at my leisure," said he. I now perceived that I had an opportunity to plead my cause, and therefore delivered myself thus: "I am persuaded, most holy father, that the author of all this mischief is no other than Cardinal Salviati; because he sent for me immediately upon your Holiness's departure, and, when I came to him, called my work a fantastical trifle, and told me he would make me finish it in a galley. These opprobrious words made such an

impression on me, that through the great perturbation of mind I was in, I felt my face all on a sudden inflamed, and my eyes were attacked by so violent a heat, that I could hardly find my way home. A few days after there fell upon them two cataracts, which blinded me to such a degree that I could hardly see the light, and since your Holiness's departure I have not been able to do a stroke of work." Having spoken thus, I rose up and withdrew. I was told that the pope said after I was gone: "When places of trust are given, discretion is not always conveyed with them. I did not bid the cardinal treat people quite so roughly: if it be true that he has a disorder in his eyes, as I shall know by asking my physician, I should be inclined to look upon him with an eye of compassion."

There happened to be present a person of distinction, who was a great favourite of the pope, and equally conspicuous for his virtues and extraordinary endowments. Having inquired of the pontiff who I was, he added: "Holy father, I ask you this, because you appeared to me, in the same breath, to fall into a most violent passion, and to be equally affected and softened into pity, so I desire to know who he is: if he be a person deserving of assistance, I will tell him a secret to cure his disorder." The pope made answer: "The person you speak of is one of the greatest geniuses in his way, that the world ever produced. When I see you again I will show you some of his admirable performances, as likewise the man himself; and it will be a great satisfaction to me, if you are able to do him any service."

Three days after the pope sent for me after dinner, and the above-mentioned person of distinction was present. No sooner was I come than his Holiness sent for the button of his pontifical cope, which has been already described. In the meantime I produced my chalice; upon seeing which, the gentleman declared he had never beheld so extraordinary a piece of work in his life. The button

being brought, his surprise was greatly increased: he looked at me attentively, and said: "He is but a young man, and therefore the better able to improve himself." He then asked me my name. I told him it was Benvenuto. He replied, alluding to my name: "Upon this occasion I am *welcome* to you: take lily of the valley with its stalk, flower, and beard altogether, distil them with a gentle fire, bathe your eyes with the water several times a day, and you will certainly get rid of your complaint; but before you begin the bathing, take physic." The pope spoke kindly to me, and I left him, tolerably well pleased with my reception.

My disorder, which was of a serious kind, contracted at the time of the robbery, had remained latent for above four months, and then broke out at once. The only external symptom by which it showed itself was by covering me all over with little red blisters, about the size of a farthing. The physicians would never call this malady by its right name, though I told them the causes to which I ascribed it. They continued to treat me in their own way, but I received no benefit from their prescriptions. At last I resolved, contrary to the advice of the most eminent physicians of Rome, to have recourse to lignum vitæ. This I took with all the precautions and abstinence imaginable, and recovering surprisingly, in the space of fifty days was perfectly cured, and as sound as a roach. Then, by way of recreation after what I had gone through, winter approaching, I took the diversion of fowling: this made me wade through brooks, face storms, and pass my time in marshy grounds; so that in a few days I was attacked by a disorder a hundred times more severe than the former. I put myself a second time into the hands of physicians, and found I grew worse every day by their medicines. My disorder being attended with a fever, I proposed to take lignum vitæ, but the physicians opposed it, assuring me that if I meddled with it whilst the fever was upon me, I should die in a week. I resolved, however,

to take it, even against their opinion, observing the same regimen as before. After I had for four days drunk the decoction of lignum vitæ, the fever totally left me, and I began to recover surprisingly.

Whilst I was taking this wood, I went on with the model of the work above mentioned, and abstinence sharpening my invention, I performed the finest things and of the most admirable invention that I ever did in my life. In fifty days I was perfectly recovered, and afterwards gave my chief attention to the preservation of my health. This long course of medicine being at last over, I found myself as thoroughly cured of my disorder as if I had been new born; and though I took pleasure in securing my much-wished-for health, I continued to labour both on the work above mentioned, and for the Mint; and did as much as could reasonably be expected from the most diligent artificer.

CHAPTER XII

Cardinal Salviati, with whom I had the difference above related, and who was so much my enemy, happened about this time to be made legate of Parma, when a certain Milanese goldsmith, named Tobbia, was taken up in that city for counterfeiting the current coin. Upon his being condemned to the flames, a great man spoke in his favour to the legate. The cardinal caused the execution to be respited, and wrote to Pope Clement, giving him to understand that there had fallen into his hands one of the ablest artists living in the goldsmith and jeweller's business, and that he had been condemned to be burnt for coining, but that he was a mere simpleton: this appeared by his saying he had asked the opinion of his confessor, who told him he gave him permission, and that he might do it with a safe conscience. He added: "If your Holiness should send for this great artist to Rome, you will have the means

of humbling the pride of your favourite Benvenuto, and I make no doubt but the workmanship of Tobbia will please you much more than that of Benvenuto."

The pope was accordingly induced by the legate's persuasion to send for this person to Rome, and upon his arrival ordered us both into his presence. He then commanded each of us to draw a design for setting an unicorn's horn, the most beautiful that ever was seen, which had cost 17,000 ducats: and as the pope proposed making a present of it to King Francis, he chose to have it first richly adorned with gold: so he employed us both to draw the designs.

When we had finished them, we carried them to the pope. Tobbia's design was in the form of a candlestick; the horn was to enter it like a candle, and at the bottom of the candlestick he represented four little unicorns' heads —a most simple invention. As soon as I saw it I could not contain myself so as to avoid smiling at the oddity of the conceit. The pope perceiving this, said: "Let me see that design of yours." It was a single head of an unicorn, fitted to receive the horn. I had made the most beautiful sort of head conceivable, for I drew it partly in the form of a horse's head, and partly in that of a hart's, adorned with the finest sort of wreaths and other devices; insomuch that no sooner was my design seen but the whole court gave it the preference. However, as some Milanese gentlemen of great authority were witnesses of this contest, they said: "Most holy father, if you propose sending this noble present to France, you should take it into consideration that the French are an undiscerning, tasteless people, and will not be sensible of the excellence of this masterly piece of Benvenuto's. But they will be pleased with these grotesque figures of Tobbia's, which will be sooner executed; and Benvenuto will in the meantime finish your chalice: thus will two works be completed at once, and this poor man will be employed, without having reason to complain that he has been brought hither for nothing." The pope,

who was in haste to have his chalice finished, readily acquiesced in the opinion of these Milanese; so the day following he gave the unicorn's horn to Tobbia, and sent me word by his wardrobe-keeper that I was to finish his chalice.

I made answer that there was nothing I more ardently desired than to complete the fine piece of work I was about; adding that if it were to be made of any other materials than gold I could easily finish it myself, and that without assistance; but that his Holiness must now supply me with more gold. Scarce had I uttered these words, when this man, a low retainer to the court, bid me take care how I asked money of the pope: if I did, I should put him into such a passion that I should afterwards repent it. To this I replied: "Then, good sir, please to inform me how bread can be made without flour; just in the same manner can this work be finished without gold." The wardrobe-keeper, who felt the keenness of the ridicule, told me he would inform his Holiness of all I had said, and was as good as his word. The pope, flying into a most furious passion, said he would see whether I was mad enough to neglect finishing it. He waited, however, two months, during which, though I had declared I would not work a single stroke, I had done quite the reverse, and wrought constantly with the utmost diligence; the pope, however, finding I did not bring the chalice, began to be greatly out of temper, and declared that he was resolved to punish me.

There was present, when he uttered these words, a Milanese, his Holiness's jeweller: his name was Pompeo, and he was a near relation of one Signor Trajano, who of all Pope Clement's servants was most in his master's favour. These two in concert said to the pope: "If your Holiness were to deprive him of his place in the Mint, perhaps he would think of finishing the chalice." The pope replied "That would rather be productive of two misfortunes—one that I should be ill served at the Mint, which is o

the greatest consequence to me, the other that I should certainly never see the chalice." The two Milanese, however, seeing the pope very angry with me, used such persuasions that at last he deprived me of my place in the Mint, and gave it to a young Perugian, who was nicknamed Fagiolo. Pompeo came to tell me from the pope that his Holiness had removed me from my place in the Mint, and would deprive me of something else, if I did not make haste to finish my work. "Tell his Holiness," answered I, "that he deprives himself and not me of the place in the Mint; that the case would be the same with respect to other matters; and that if his Holiness should be ever so desirous to restore my place to me, I would upon no account accept of it."

This vile wretch thought it an age till he could see the pope again, in order to repeat to him every word I said, to which he took care to add something of his own. About a week after, the pope sent me word by the same messenger, that he no longer desired I should finish the chalice, but wanted to have it exactly in the state to which I had brought it. I answered: "Pompeo, this is not like the place in the Mint, which it was in his power to deprive me of: five hundred crowns, which I received, are indeed his Holiness's property, and those I will restore to him; as for the work, it is mine, and that I will dispose of as I think proper." Pompeo hastened to repeat this to the pope, with some severe and sarcastical expressions, which I threw out against himself, and which he well deserved.

Three days after, upon a Thursday, there came to me two of the pope's favourite gentlemen of the bedchamber, one of whom is now living, and a bishop. This was Signor Pier Giovanni, wardrobe-keeper to his Holiness; the other was of a still more noble family, but I cannot recollect his name. As soon as they entered my house they addressed me thus: "The pope sends us, Benvenuto, because you have trifled with him and would not be prevailed on by

fair means: we have orders, in case you do not give us the chalice, to conduct you directly to prison." I looked them in the face boldly, and said: "Gentlemen, were I to give his Holiness my work, I should give him my property and not his, and I do not intend to part with anything that is mine; for, as I have brought this piece to a high degree of perfection with the sweat of my brow, I do not choose that it should be put into the hands of some ignorant fellow, who will probably spoil it."

The goldsmith, Tobbia, who was present, was so rash as to require of me the models of my work: the words with which I answered him, and which such a wretch well deserved, it would not be proper here to insert. As the gentlemen of the bedchamber pressed me to determine what I intended to do, I told them that I had already determined; and having taken my cloak, before I went out of the shop, I turned to an image of Christ, and said, with the utmost reverence and devotion, holding my cap in my hand: "Merciful and immortal, just and holy Lord, all that Thou dost is according to Thy justice, which is not to be equalled; Thou knowest that I am arrived at thirty years of age, and that I was never before threatened with imprisonment for any action whatever; since it is now Thy pleasure that I should go to gaol, I submit, and thank Thee with a heart resigned." Then turning about to the two gentlemen, I said to them, with a smile which did not entirely conceal some perturbation of mind: "Surely, gentlemen, a man of my consequence well deserved such a guard as you; therefore put me between you, and conduct me wheresoever you think proper."

These two well-bred gentlemen, laughing very heartily, placed me between them, and chatting all the way, carried me before the Governor of Rome, whose name was Magalotti: there was with him the Procurator of the Exchequer, and both waited my coming. The gentlemen, laughing all the while, said to the governor: "We consign this prisoner to you: be sure to take proper care of him. We are very

glad that we have saved your officers some trouble, for Benvenuto told us that as this was the first time of his being arrested, meaner guards would have been unworthy of him." They repaired to the pope, and having given him a circumstantial account of all that passed, he at first seemed to be ready to fly into a passion, but upon recollecting himself, forced a smile, because there were present some noblemen and cardinals my friends, who were very much inclined to favour me. In the meantime the governor and the procurator partly rated, partly expostulated with me, and partly gave me their advice, telling me, "That it was but just and reasonable that he who employs another in any work whatever, should take it back when and in what manner he thinks proper." I made answer: "That this was not agreeable to justice, and that a pope had no right to act in that manner; because his Holiness was not like those petty tyrants who oppress their subjects to the utmost, paying no regard either to law or justice; but he was Christ's vicar, and therefore was not allowed to pursue the same measures." The governor, in a tone and manner which might become a bailiff, cried out: "Benvenuto, Benvenuto, you will at last oblige me to use you according to your deserts."—"If so," replied I, "you will behave honourably and politely to me; since I deserve no less." He then said: "Send for the work directly, and don't make me speak to you a second time." I thereupon rejoined: "Gentlemen, do me the favour to permit me to say but four words more in my defence." The Procurator of the Exchequer, who was a more humane magistrate than the governor, turned about to the latter, and said to him: "My lord, indulge him in a hundred words; provided he returns the work, that is sufficient." I then delivered myself in these terms: "If a man were to build a house or a palace, he might justly say to the mason employed in that business, 'Give me my house; I don't choose you should work any longer at my palace or my habitation;' and, upon paying the mason for his trouble, he would

have a just right to dismiss him. If it were even a nobleman who gave directions for setting a jewel worth a thousand crowns, and if he perceived that the jeweller did not do it to his mind, he might say, 'Give me my jewel, for I don't approve of your workmanship.' But the present case is quite different, for neither a house nor a jewel is here in question: nothing more can be required of me but that I should return five hundred crowns, which I have received. So, my lord, do what you will, you shall have nothing more than the five hundred crowns, and this you may tell the pope. Your menaces do not in the least intimidate me, for I am an honest man, and fear God only."

The Governor and Procurator of the Exchequer having risen from their seats, said they were going to his Holiness, and that when they had received his orders they would return to my sorrow. Thus I remained under a guard. I walked about in a little hall, and it was near three hours before they returned. Upon this occasion I was visited by all the chief men of our country in the mercantile way, who earnestly entreated me not to contend with a pope, as my ruin might very likely be the consequence. I made answer that I had maturely considered the measures I was pursuing.

As soon as the governor returned with the Procurator of the Exchequer, he called to me and said: "Benvenuto, I am sorry to come back from his Holiness with so severe an order: either quickly produce the chalice, or beware of the consequences." I made answer, that as I could never persuade myself that a vicar of Christ was capable of doing injustice, I would not believe it till I saw it; so that he might do whatever he thought proper. The governor replied: "I have two words more to say to you from his Holiness, after which I shall proceed to execute my orders. It is the pope's pleasure you shall bring your work hither, that I may get it put into a box, and then I am to carry it to his Holiness, who promises upon his

word to keep it sealed up as he receives it, and will quickly return it to you without ever meddling with it; but he requires that this should be complied with, as his honour is concerned in the affair." To these words I answered, smiling, that I would very readily put my work into his hands in the manner he required, because I was desirous to know what dependence there could be upon the faith of a pope.

Accordingly, having sent for my work, I put it into his hands, sealed up in the manner required. The governor having returned to the pope with the box sealed up as above, his Holiness, after turning it several times, as I was afterwards informed by the governor, asked the latter if he had seen my work? He answered that he had, and it had been sealed up in his presence, adding that it appeared to him a very extraordinary performance. Upon which the pope said: "You may tell Benvenuto that Roman pontiffs have authority to loose and bind things of much greater importance than this;" and whilst he uttered these words, he with an angry look opened the box, taking off the cord and the seal. He then examined it attentively, and, by what I could learn, showed it to Tobbia, the goldsmith, who praised it highly. The pope asked him whether he would undertake to make a piece of work in the same taste, and according to the same model. The other answered he would. The pope desired him to follow that model exactly; and, turning to the governor, spoke to him thus: "See whether Benvenuto is disposed to let us have it in its present condition: in case he is ready to comply, he shall be paid for it, whatever price it may be valued at by any intelligent person. If he is willing to finish it, let him take his own time, and give him whatever assistance he can reasonably require." Hereupon the governor answered: "Most holy father, I am acquainted with the audacious character of this young man: grant me authority to deal sharply with him in my own way." The pope replied that he gave him full

liberty as to words, though he was sure he would only make the breach wider; adding that when he found all ineffectual, he should order me to carry the five hundred crowns to his jeweller Pompeo.

The governor being returned sent for me to his apartment, and addressed me thus with the bluff air of a grenadier: "Popes have authority to loose and bind the whole world; and what they do in this manner upon earth, immediately receives the sanction of Heaven: here is your box, which has been opened and examined by his Holiness." I then loudly exclaimed: "I return thanks to Heaven that I am now qualified to set a proper value on the word of God's vicegerent." The governor thereupon offered me many gross insults, both in word and deed; but perceiving that all his brutality had no effect, he quite despaired of success in what he had undertaken, namely, to browbeat me into compliance: he, therefore, assumed a milder tone, and said to me: "Benvenuto, I am sorry you are blind to your own interest; since that is the case, carry the five hundred crowns to Pompeo when you think proper."

Having taken back the box, I went directly to Pompeo with the five hundred crowns. The pope thought that, either through inability or some other accident, I should not carry the money quite so soon; but as he had still a great desire to get me again into his service, when he saw Pompeo come smiling with the money, he began to rate him soundly, and expressed great concern that the affair had taken such a turn. He then said to him: "Go to Benvenuto's shop, behave with as much complaisance to him as your stupidity and ignorance will permit, and tell him that if he will finish that piece of work, to serve as a shrine for carrying the holy sacrament in, when I walk in procession with it, I will grant him whatever favour he desires of me." Pompeo came and called me out of the shop, and behaving to me with a great deal of awkward ceremony and grimace, repeated all the pope had said to

him. I immediately made answer that the highest pleasure I could wish for in this world was to recover the favour of so great a pontiff, which I had lost not by any fault of my own but by sickness and misfortune; as also by the ill offices of those envious persons who take pleasure in injuring their neighbours. "But, as his Holiness has a great number of servants," I continued, "let him no more send you to me, if he values your life; and be sure you mind your own business. I shall never cease by day or night to think and do all I can to serve the pope; but remember that you have spoken ill of me to his Holiness, and never interpose any more in what concerns me: if you do, I will make you sensible of your error, by treating you according to your deserts." The fellow having left me, repeated every word I had said to the pope, but misrepresented it in such a manner as to make me appear in a much worse light than I otherwise should have done. Here the affair rested for a time, and I again attended to my shop and business.

During this interval, Tobbia, the goldsmith, was employed in finishing the case and ornament for the unicorn's horn: the pope had given him orders when he had finished that piece to begin the chalice upon my model, which he had seen. Tobbia having shown his Holiness some specimens of his work, the latter was so little satisfied with them that he began to repent his having ever differed with me, and expressed great dislike for the man's workmanship, highly censuring the person who had recommended him: in consequence of which, Baccino della Croce often came to me from the pope, desiring me to make the shrine in question. I told him that I entreated his Holiness to let me take my repose a little after the severe disorder with which I had been afflicted, and from which I was not yet thoroughly recovered, and that as soon as ever I was in a condition to work, I would devote all my hours to his Holiness's service. I had now begun to draw his

likeness, and was employed in secret to engrave a medal for him. The dies of steel for stamping the medal I made at home; in my shop I had a partner, who had been my journeyman, and whose name was Felice.

CHAPTER XIII

About this time I fell in love, as young men are apt to do. The object of my passion was a Sicilian girl, of extraordinary beauty, who seemed to repay my attachment with an equal ardour. Although we concealed our mutual regard from her mother, the old lady perceived it, and was apprehensive of the consequences. I had indeed formed a design to run away with the girl to Florence, and stay there a year with her, unknown to her mother. The latter being apprised of my intention, quitted Rome one night with her daughter, and having taken the road to Naples, gave out that she was going to Civita Vecchia, but went to Ostia. I followed them to Civita Vecchia, and committed innumerable extravagances in search of my mistress. It would be tedious to give a circumstantial account of all these follies; let it suffice to say that I was upon the point of losing my senses or dying of grief.

Two months after, the girl wrote me word that she was in Sicily, extremely unhappy. I was then indulging myself in pleasures of all sorts, and had engaged in another amour to cancel the memory of my Sicilian mistress. It happened, through a variety of odd accidents, that I made acquaintance with a Sicilian priest, who was a man of genius, and well versed in the Latin and Greek authors. Happening one day to have some conversation with him upon the art of necromancy, I, who had a great desire to know something of the matter, told him that I had all my life felt a curiosity to be acquainted with the mysteries of this art. The priest made answer, "that the

man must be of a resolute and steady temper who enters upon that study." I replied "that I had fortitude and resolution enough, if I could but find an opportunity." The priest subjoined: "If you think you have the heart to venture, I will give you all the satisfaction you can desire." Thus we agreed to undertake this matter.

The priest one evening prepared to satisfy me, and desired me to look out for a companion or two. I invited one Vincenzio Romoli, who was my intimate acquaintance: he brought with him a native of Pistoia, who cultivated the black art himself. We repaired to the Colosseo, and the priest, according to the custom of necromancers, began to draw circles upon the ground with the most impressive ceremonies imaginable: he likewise brought thither assafœtida, several precious perfumes, and fire, with some compositions which diffused noisome odours. As soon as he was in readiness, he made an opening in the circle, and having taken us by the hand one by one, he placed us within it. Then having arranged the other parts and assumed his wand, he ordered the other necromancer, his partner, to throw the perfumes into the fire at a proper time, entrusting the care of the fire and the perfumes to the rest, and began his incantations. This ceremony lasted above an hour and a half, when there appeared several legions of devils, insomuch that the amphitheatre was quite filled with them.

I was busy about the perfumes, when the priest, perceiving there was a considerable number of infernal spirits, turned to me, and said: "Benvenuto, ask them something." I answered: "Let them bring me into the company of my Sicilian mistress, Angelica." That night we obtained no answer of any sort; but I had received great satisfaction in having my curiosity so far indulged. The necromancer told me it was requisite we should go a second time, assuring me that I should be satisfied in whatever I asked, but that I must bring with me a pure and immaculate boy.

I took with me a youth who was in my service, of about twelve years of age, together with the same Vincenzio Romoli, who had been my companion the first time, and one Agnolino Gaddi, an intimate acquaintance, whom I likewise prevailed on to assist at the ceremony. When we came to the place appointed, the priest having made his preparations as before, with the same and even more striking ceremonies, placed us within the circle, which he had likewise drawn with a more wonderful art, and in a more solemn manner than at our former meeting. Thus having committed the care of the perfumes and the fire to my friend Vincenzio, who was assisted by Agnolino Gaddi, he put into my hand a pentacle or magical chart, and bid me turn it towards the places that he should direct me; and under the pentacle I held my boy. The necromancer having begun to make his tremendous invocations, called by their names a multitude of demons, who were the leaders of the several legions, and invoked them by the virtue and power of the eternal uncreated God, who lives for ever, in the Hebrew language, as likewise in Latin and Greek; insomuch that the amphitheatre was almost in an instant filled with demons a hundred times more numerous than at the former conjuration. Vincenzio Romoli was busied in making a fire with the assistance of Agnolino, and burning a great quantity of precious perfumes. I, by the direction of the necromancer, again desired to be in the company of my Angelica. The former thereupon turning to me said: "Know, they have declared that in the space of a month you shall be in her company."

He then requested me to stand resolutely by him, because the legions were now above a thousand more in number than he had designed, and besides, these were the most dangerous, so that after they had answered my question it behoved him to be civil to them, and dismiss them quietly. At the same time, the boy under the pentacle was in a terrible fright, saying that there were in that place a million of fierce men who threatened to

destroy us; and that moreover four armēd giants of an enormous stature were endeavouring to break into our circle. During this time, whilst the necromancer, trembling with fear, endeavoured by mild and gentle methods to dismiss them in the best way he could, Vincenzio Romoli, who quivered like an aspen leaf, took care of the perfumes. Though I was as much terrified as any of them, I did my utmost to conceal the terror I felt, so that I greatly contributed to inspire the rest with resolution; but the truth is, I gave myself over for a dead man, seeing the horrid fright the necromancer was in. The boy placed his head between his knees, and said: "In this posture will I die; for we shall all surely perish." I told him that all those demons were under us, and what he saw was smoke and shadow; so bid him hold up his head and take courage. No sooner did he look up, but he cried out: "The whole amphitheatre is burning, and the fire is just falling upon us;" so covering his eyes with his hands, he again exclaimed that destruction was inevitable, and he desired to see no more. The necromancer entreated me to have a good heart, and take care to burn proper perfumes; upon which I turned to Romoli, and bid him burn all the assafœtida he had. At the same time I cast my eye upon Agnolino Gaddi, who was terrified to such a degree that he could scarce distinguish objects, and seemed to be half dead. Seeing him in this condition, I said: "Agnolo, upon these occasions a man should not yield to fear, but should stir about and give his assistance; so come directly and put on some more of the assafœtida." Poor Agnolo, upon attempting to move, was so violently terrified that the effects of his fear overpowered all the perfumes we were burning. The boy, hearing a crepitation, ventured once more to raise his head, when seeing me laugh, he began to take courage, and said that the devils were flying away with a vengeance.

In this condition we stayed till the bell rang for morning

prayer. The boy again told us that there remained but few devils, and these were at a great distance. When the magician had performed the rest of his ceremonies, he stripped off his gown, and took up a wallet full of books which he had brought with him. We all went out of the circle together, keeping as close to each other as we possibly could, especially the boy, who had placed himself in the middle, holding the necromancer by the coat and me by the cloak. As we were going to our houses, in the quarter of Banchi, the boy told us that two of the demons whom we had seen at the amphitheatre, went on before us, leaping and skipping, sometimes running upon the roofs of the houses, and sometimes upon the ground.

The priest declared that though he had often entered magic circles, nothing so extraordinary had ever happened to him. As we went along he would fain have persuaded me to assist with him at consecrating a book, from which he said we should derive immense riches: we should then ask the demons to discover to us the various treasures with which the earth abounds, which would raise us to opulence and power; but that those love affairs were mere follies, from whence no good could be expected. I answered, "That I would have readily accepted his proposal, if I had understood Latin." He redoubled his persuasions, assuring me that the knowledge of the Latin language was by no means material. He added that he could have found Latin scholars enough if he had thought it worth while to look out for them, but that he could never have met with a partner of resolution and intrepidity equal to mine, and that I should by all means follow his advice. Whilst we were engaged in this conversation we arrived at our respective homes, and all that night dreamt of nothing but devils.

As I every day saw the priest, he did not fail to renew his solicitations to engage me to come into his proposal. I asked him what time it would take to carry his plan into execution, and where this scene was to be acted. He

answered: "That in less than a month we might complete it, and that the place best calculated for our purpose was the mountains of Norcia: though a master of his had performed the ceremony of consecration hard by the mountains of the Abbey of Farfa, but that he had met with some difficulties which would not occur in those of Norcia." He added, "That the neighbouring peasants were men who might be confided in, and had some knowledge of necromancy, insomuch that they were likely to give us great assistance upon occasion." Such an effect had the persuasions of this holy conjurer that I readily agreed to all he desired, but told him that I should be glad to finish the medals I was making for the pope first: this secret I communicated to him, but to nobody else, and begged he would not divulge it. I constantly asked him whether he thought I should, at the time mentioned by the devil, have an interview with my mistress Angelica; and finding it approach, I was surprised to hear no tidings of her. The priest always assured me that I should without fail enjoy her company, as the demons never break their promise when they make it in the solemn manner they had done to me. He bid me therefore wait patiently, and avoid giving room to any scandal upon that occasion, but make an effort to bear something against my nature, as he was aware of the great danger I was to encounter; adding that it would be happy for me if I would go with him to consecrate the book, as it would be the way to obviate the danger, and could not fail to make both him and me happy.

I, who began to be as eager to undertake the enterprise as he to propose it, told him that there was just come to Rome one Giovanni da Castel Bolognese, an excellent artist; that he was particularly skilful in making such medals of steel as I was employed about; and I desired nothing more than to emulate this great man, in order to display my genius to the world, hoping by that means, and not by the sword, to subdue my numerous enemies.

The priest continued his persuasions notwithstanding, and said to me: "My dear Benvenuto, come along with me, and keep out of the way of a very great danger, which I see impending over your head." I had resolved, however, to finish my medal first, and the end of the month was now approaching, but my mind was so taken up with my medal that I thought no more either of Angelica, or anything else, except my present task.

I happened one day, about the hour of vespers, to have occasion to go from home at an unusual hour to my shop (fronting Banchi, while my house was situated at the back), where I left all the business to the care of my partner, whose name was Felice. Having stayed there a short time, and recollecting that I had something to say to Alessandro del Bene, I instantly set out, and being arrived in the quarter of Banchi, accidentally met with a friend of mine, whose name was Benedetto; he was a notary public, a native of Florence, and the son of a blind man of Siena, who lived by alms. This Benedetto had resided several years at Naples, from whence he went to Rome, where he transacted business for certain merchants of Siena, of the name of Figi. My partner had several times requested him to pay for some rings, which Benedetto had given him to mend. Meeting him that day in the quarter of Banchi, he asked him again for the money with some asperity (which was customary with him), when Benedetto was with his employers. These people, observing what passed, rebuked the latter severely, telling him they would employ another person, to prevent their being any longer disturbed with such uproars. Benedetto made the best defence he could, assuring them that he had paid that goldsmith, and that he could not prevent madmen from raving. The merchants, not satisfied with this excuse, dismissed him their service. Immediately after this affair, he dressed himself and came to my shop, in a great rage, perhaps in order to abuse Felice. It happened that we met exactly in the middle of the Banchi quarter. As I knew nothing

of what had passed, I saluted him with my usual complaisance, but he returned my politeness with a torrent of opprobrious language. I thereupon recollected what the necromancer had told me of an impending danger, and keeping upon my guard in the best manner I could, I said to him: "My dear friend Benedetto, don't be angry with me, for I have done you no injury, and know nothing of the misfortunes that may have befallen you. If you have anything to do with Felice, go and settle it with himself: he is very able to give you an answer. As I am entirely ignorant of the affair in question, you are in the wrong to give me such language, especially as you know that I am not a man to put up with an affront." He made answer: "That I was thoroughly acquainted with the whole transaction; that it should not end so, and that Felice and I were both very great scoundrels."

By this time a crowd had gathered about us to hear the dispute. Provoked by his abusive language, I stooped down, and taking up a lump of dirt (for it had just been raining), I aimed it at him, intending to throw it full in his face, but he bowed himself down a little, and it hit exactly in the middle of his head. In this dirt was a sharp flint, which cut him most severely, so that he fell upon the ground insensible, and like a dead person. From this circumstance, and from the great quantity of blood which flowed from his wound, it was the opinion of all the bystanders that he was killed upon the spot.

Whilst he lay stretched out upon the ground, and some porters who were amongst the crowd busied themselves to carry off the corpse, Pompeo, the jeweller, whom the pope had sent for about some job in his way, happening to pass by, and seeing the man in so dismal a plight, asked who had used him in that manner. He was told that Benvenuto was the man, but that it had been all the fool's own seeking. Pompeo ran in all haste to the pope and said to him: "Most holy father, Benvenuto has just murdered Tobbia; I saw it with my own eyes." The pope

hearing this, flew into a most violent passion, and ordered the governor, who happened to be present, to seize and hang me directly upon the very spot where the murder was committed. He enjoined him to use the utmost diligence in taking me, and upon no account to appear before him till he had seen justice done.

As soon as I beheld the unfortunate man in the situation I have described, I began to think of taking measures for my safety, seriously reflecting on the power of my enemies, and the danger in which this affair might involve me. I therefore quitted the place, and retired to the house of Signor Gaddi, clerk of the chamber, proposing to get myself in readiness with all possible expedition, and go where Providence should direct me; though Signor Gaddi advised me not to be in such a hurry, as the danger might possibly be much less than I imagined. Having thereupon sent for Signor Annibale Caro, who lived in the same house with him, he desired him to inquire into the affair. Whilst we were talking of this matter, and the above orders were given, there came to us a Roman gentleman, who lived with the Cardinal de' Medici, and had been sent to us by that prince. This gentleman, taking Signor Gaddi and me aside, told us that the cardinal had repeated to him the words above mentioned, which he had heard uttered by the pope; he added that it was impossible to save me, advising me to fly that first ebullition of anger, and not venture upon any account to stay in Rome. As soon as the gentleman was gone, Signor Gaddi, looking at me attentively, seemed to shed tears, and said: "Alas! how unfortunate am I, that I have it not in my power to assist you." I answered: "With the help of God I shall extricate myself out of all difficulties; all I ask of you is, that you will be so good as to lend me a horse." Instantly a brown Turkish horse, one of the handsomest and best in Rome, was got ready for me; I mounted it, and placed an arquebuse at the pummel of the saddle, to defend myself.

When I arrived at Sixtus's bridge, I found the whole body of city-guards, horse and foot, drawn up there; so, making a virtue of necessity, I boldly clapped spurs to my horse, and by God's mercy, passed free and unobserved. Thus I repaired with the utmost speed to Palombara, the place of residence of Signor Giambattista Savelli; and from thence I sent back the horse to Signor Giovanni Gaddi, but chose to make a secret of the place where I was, even to that gentleman. Signor Giambattista, after giving me the kindest reception imaginable, and treating me in the most generous manner during two whole days, advised me to quit the place, and bend my course towards Naples, till the first gust of the pope's fury should be over. Having procured me company, he put me on the road to Naples.

I met by the way a sculptor, a friend of mine, named Solosmeo, who was going to S. Germano, to finish the tomb of Piero de' Medici at Monte Cassino. This person informed me that the very evening of my departure, Pope Clement had sent one of the gentlemen of his bedchamber to inquire after Tobbia; and that the gentleman upon finding him at work, and that nothing at all had happened to him, nay, that he was quite ignorant of the whole affair, had made a report to his Holiness of the real state of the case. The pope thereupon turned to Pompeo, and said: "You are a most abandoned wretch; but one thing I can assure you of, you have stirred a snake which will sting you, and that's what you well deserve." He next addressed himself to the Cardinal de' Medici, and desired him to inquire after me, telling him he would not lose me on any account whatever.

In the meantime, Solosmeo and I jogged on together towards Naples, by way of Monte Cassino, singing all the way.

CHAPTER XIV

Solosmeo having attended to his work at Monte Cassino, we travelled together towards Naples. When we came within half a mile of that capital, we were accosted by an innkeeper, who invited us to put up at his house, and told us that he had lived several years in Florence with Charles Ginori, Mayor of Florence, adding that if we would take up our quarters with him, we should meet with the kindest and most civil treatment. We told the man several times that we did not choose to stop at his house. The fellow, notwithstanding, continued to ride on with us; and frequently turning back, repeated the same thing, telling us he should be very glad of our company at his inn. Tired at last of his importunity, I asked him whether he could direct me to a Sicilian lady, named Beatrice, who had a daughter called Angelica, and who were both courtesans. The innkeeper thinking I was in jest, made answer: "Curse on all such, and all that take pleasure in their company;" then clapping spurs to his horse, he galloped off, as if determined to quit us entirely.

I began to applaud the address with which I had got rid of this impertinent devil; though I still was never the nearer, for when I recollected my passion for Angelica, I fetched a deep sigh, and began to talk of her to Solosmeo. As we were thus engaged in chat, the innkeeper came riding up to us again full speed, and as soon as he joined us, said: "Two or three days ago there came a lady and her daughter to lodge next door to me, of the very name you mention, but whether they are Sicilians or not I cannot justly say." I replied: "The name of Angelica has such charms for me that I am resolved by all means to take up my quarters at your inn." Thus we rode into Naples in company with the innkeeper, and dismounted at his house. I thought it an age till I had put every-

thing belonging to me into proper order; and then went to the house adjoining to the inn, where I found my dear Angelica, who received me with the greatest demonstrations of affection and kindness. I continued with her from six o'clock that evening until the following morning. Whilst I enjoyed the exquisite pleasure of her company, I recollected that this very day the month was expired, which had been fixed in the necromancer's circle by the demons: so let every one who has recourse to such oracles, seriously reflect upon the dangers which I had to encounter.

I happened to have in my purse a diamond, which was particularly noticed by the goldsmiths; and though but a young man, I was generally known in Naples for a person of some consequence, and greatly esteemed by the citizens. Amongst others a very worthy man, a jeweller, named Signor Dominico Fontana, was lavish of his civilities to me, so as to discontinue the business of his shop during three days that I passed at Naples; he showed me the most interesting remains of art both in and beyond the city; and moreover introduced me to the viceroy, who had intimated a desire to see me. As soon as I came into the presence of his excellency, he showed me a thousand civilities, during which my diamond dazzled his eye. When at his particular desire I had shown it him, he told me that if I were disposed to part with it, he hoped I would not forget him. Upon his returning me the diamond, I again put it into his excellency's hand, telling him that both the jewel and its owner were very much at his service. He declared that he set a high value upon the diamond, but should be better pleased if I would reside at his court; adding that he would take care I should be satisfied with my treatment. Many civilities thereupon passed between us; but the conversation afterwards turning on the value of the diamond, his excellency commanded me to set a price upon it. I told him that it was worth exactly two hundred crowns. To this his excellency made

answer that I appeared to him not to be unreasonable; but that he ascribed the extraordinary beauty of the stone to its being set by me, who was one of the first men living in the jewelling business; and if it were set by another hand, it would not seem to be of half the value. I told him it was not I that had set the diamond, for the work was but indifferent, and that he who did it had considered only its intrinsic value; but, if I were to set it myself, it would appear to much greater advantage, and shine with redoubled lustre. Thereupon I put my thumb-nail to the ligatures of the diamond, and drew it out of the ring: then rubbing it a little, I handed it to the viceroy. His excellency's surprise was equal to his satisfaction, and he wrote me an order that the two hundred crowns which I demanded should be paid at sight.

At my return to my lodgings I found a letter from the Cardinal de' Medici, by which I was desired to return to Rome without loss of time; and, immediately upon my arrival, to dismount at his palace. When I had read the letter to Angelica, she with a flood of tears entreated me either to stay at Naples or to carry her with me to Rome. I answered that if she chose to accompany me to Rome, I would give her the two hundred ducats, which I had received from the viceroy, to keep for me. Her mother, seeing us close in conversation, came up to us and accosted me thus: "Benvenuto, if you propose carrying my Angelica to Rome with you, leave me fifteen ducats to pay for my lying-in, and afterwards I will follow you myself." I told the old beldame that I would leave her thirty with pleasure, if she would let her daughter accompany me. This being agreed on, Angelica requested me to buy her a gown of black velvet, as that manufacture was cheap at Naples. I consented to everything, and having sent for the velvet, bargained for it myself. The old woman thereupon thinking me soft and easy to be made a dupe of, asked me for fine clothes for herself and her sons, and a larger supply of money than I had promised her. I com-

plained of this in gentle terms, and said: "My dear Beatrice, is not what I have offered you enough?" She answered in the negative. I then told her that what was not enough for her would suffice for me; and taking my leave of Angelica, who shed tears at parting, whilst I only laughed, I set out in order to return to Rome.

I left Naples with my pocket full of money by night, for fear of being waylaid and assassinated, which is a common thing in that country. When I arrived at Selciata, I with great valour and address defended myself against several men on horseback, who attacked and would have murdered me. Having left Solosmeo busy with his monument at Monte Cassino, I one day stopped at the inn of Anagni to dine. Near this place I shot at some birds and killed them, but at the same time tore my right hand with the lock of my gun; and though the hurt was not of much consequence, it had an ugly appearance, the blood flowing in copious streams from my hand. When I had got to the inn and put my horse into the stable, I was shown into a room, where I found several Neapolitan gentlemen just going to sit down to table, and with them a young lady, one of the most lovely creatures my eyes ever beheld. On entering the chamber I was attended by my servant, a clever stout young fellow, armed with a long partisan: the sight of us, together with the arms and the blood, threw the poor gentlemen into such a panic (there being a nest of assassins in the place), that, rising from their seats, they in the utmost terror and consternation prayed to God to assist them. I told them with a smile that God had already heard their prayers, and that I was ready to be their defender against whoever should dare to attack them. I then asked them to help me to some sort of bandage for my hand, when the beautiful lady took a handkerchief embroidered with gold, in order to make a bandage. I declined this offer, but the lady tore it in two and wrapt up my hand in it herself with a grace inexpressible. Our fears seemed to be now removed,

and we dined together cheerfully. Dinner being over, we mounted on horseback, and travelled on in company. Yet as there still remained some distrust on the side of the gentlemen, they caused the lady to engage me in conversation, leaving us at some little distance, and she and I rode on together. I made a sign to my servant to lag behind, so that we had an opportunity of conversing on subjects which are not to be disclosed to all the world. Thus was my journey to Rome the most agreeable I ever had in my life.

Upon my arrival at that city I went to alight at the palace of the Cardinal de' Medici. I soon was introduced to that prince, and paid my respects to him, with thanks for his favours: I at the same time requested him to secure me from all danger of imprisonment, or even from a fine if it were possible. The cardinal appeared overjoyed to see me, and desired me to fear nothing: he then turned to one of his gentlemen, whose name was Pierantonio Pecci of Siena, and bid him, in his name, command the city-guards not to meddle with me. He asked him next in what condition the person was, whom I had wounded in the head with a stone. Pierantonio answered that he was very ill, but would soon be worse; for having heard that I was at Rome, he declared he should willingly die to do me mischief. The cardinal answered, laughing, "The man could not have taken a surer way to convince us that he was born in Siena." Addressing himself next to me he said: "For my sake and yours avoid being seen in the quarter of Banchi for four or five days; after that you may go where you please, and let fools die when they will."

I went to my own house, and set about finishing the medal I had begun, which was a head of Pope Clement: on the reverse was a figure representing Peace. This was a little female, dressed in a thin garment, with a torch in her hand; a heap of arms tied together like a trophy, near to which was part of a temple, with a figure of Discord bound by many chains, and round it these

words as a motto: *Clauduntur belli portæ.* Whilst I was employed about this medal, the man whom I had wounded was cured. The pope was incessantly asking me why I did not go near the Cardinal de' Medici, though every time I visited his Holiness he put some job of importance into my hands, which was sufficient to prevent me. When I had finished the medal, it came to pass that Signor Piero Carnesecchi, the pope's chief favourite, became my patron. He took care to acquaint me that his master was extremely desirous to retain me in his service. I told this gentleman that I should soon make it appear that I had been always animated by an equal zeal for his Holiness.

Having a few days after finished my medal, I stamped it upon gold, silver, and copper, and showed it to Signor Piero, who immediately introduced me to the pope. I was admitted into the presence of his Holiness one day just after dinner: it was in the month of April, and the weather very fine, when he was at Belvedere. Upon entering the apartment I delivered him the medals, with the steel moulds which I used in stamping them. He took them into his hand, and observing the great ingenuity with which they were made, looked at Signor Piero, and said: "Were the ancients ever as successful in striking medals as we?" Whilst they both were examining, now the instruments, now the medals themselves, I addressed the pope in the most modest terms I could think of. "If the influence of my adverse stars had not been counteracted by the power still greater than theirs, your Holiness would have lost a faithful and zealous servant, without its being either your fault or mine. For it must be allowed to be right and well judged in cases of the utmost emergency, to do according to the proverbial expression of the vulgar, namely, to look before you leap; since the wicked, lying tongue of one of my malicious adversaries had so irritated your Holiness against me that you were incensed to the highest degree, and commanded the governor to seize and hang me directly. I make no doubt, however,

that your Holiness, upon reflecting on your loss, and the prejudice you had done to your own interest, in depriving yourself of such a servant as you acknowledge me to be, would have felt some remorse, and been sorry for what you had done. Neither parents, nor masters, possessed of prudence or good-nature, will ever proceed to sudden severities against their children or their servants, since to repent afterwards of what they have done in a passion can avail them nothing. But as the Divine Providence has defeated this malignant influence of the stars, and preserved me for your Holiness's service, I must entreat that for the future you would not so easily suffer yourself to be incensed against me."

The pope having made an end of looking at the medals, was listening to me with the greatest attention. As there were present several noblemen of the first rank, he coloured a little, and appeared to be in some confusion; but not knowing how to palliate what he had done, he declared that he did not remember to have ever given any such order. Perceiving this, I turned the conversation to other topics, in order to amuse him, and dissipate his confusion. His Holiness again entering upon the subject of the medals, asked me by what means I had contrived to stamp them so well, being so very large, for he had never observed any antique medals of the same size. We talked of this for a while, and his Holiness being apprehensive that I might say something still more severe than I had done already, told me that the medals were very fine, that he was highly pleased with them, and should be glad to have another reverse made to them, agreeable to his fancy, if medals of that sort could be stamped with two reverses. I declared they could. Upon this he ordered me to represent that part of the history of Moses, where he strikes the rock, and water issues from it, with a Latin inscription to this effect, *Ut bibat populus.* He then added, "Set about it, Benvenuto, and when you have done, I will begin to think of providing for you." As soon as I was gone he boasted

that he would find me constant employ, so that I should have no occasion to work for anybody else. Thus encouraged, I exerted myself to the utmost, and lost no time till I had finished the reverse, with the figure of Moses upon it.

CHAPTER XV

In the meantime the pope was taken ill, and his physicians being of opinion that he was in great danger, my adversary, who was still afraid of me, hired certain Neapolitan bravoes to treat me in the manner he was apprehensive I should treat him: so that I found it a very difficult matter to defend my life from his attacks. However I went on with my work, and having finished it, waited on the pope, whom I found very ill in bed; he gave me nevertheless the kindest reception, and expressing a desire to see both the medals and the instruments with which I had stamped them, ordered his spectacles and a light to be brought, but could discern nothing of the workmanship. He therefore began to examine them by the touch, and having done so for a time, he fetched a deep sigh, and told some of his courtiers that he was sorry for me, but if it pleased God to restore his health, he would settle matters to my satisfaction. Three days after, he died, and I had my labour for my pains. I took heart notwithstanding, and comforted myself with the reflection of having acquired by means of those medals so much reputation that I might depend upon being employed by any future pope, and perhaps with better success.

By such considerations did I prevent myself from being dejected; and totally forgetting the injuries I had received from Pompeo, I put on my sword and repaired to St. Peter's, where I kissed the feet of the deceased pontiff, and could not refrain from tears. I then returned to

Banchi, to reflect undisturbed on the confusion that happens on such occasions. Whilst I was sitting here in the company of several of my friends, Pompeo happened to pass by in the midst of ten armed men, and when he came opposite to the place where I sat, stopped awhile as if he had an intention to begin a quarrel. The brave young men, my friends, were for having me draw directly, but I instantly reflected, that by complying with their desire, I could not avoid hurting innocent persons; therefore thought it most advisable to expose none but myself to danger. Pompeo having stopped before my door, whilst you might say a couple of *Ave Marias*, began to laugh in my face; and when he went off, his comrades fell a-laughing likewise, shook their heads, and made many gestures in derision and defiance of me. My companions were for interposing in the quarrel, but I told them in an angry mood that I was man enough to manage all my feuds by myself; so that every one might mind his own business. Mortified at this answer, my friends went away muttering to themselves: amongst these was the dearest friend I had in the world, whose name was Albertaccio del Bene, brother to Alessandro, and Albizzo, who now resides in Lyons, and is exceeding wealthy. This Albertaccio del Bene was one of the most surprising young men I ever knew, as intrepid as Cæsar, and one who loved me as he loved himself. He was well aware that my forbearance was not an effect of pusillanimity, but of the most daring bravery, which he knew to be one of my qualities. In answer therefore to what I said, he begged of me as a favour that I would indulge him so far as to take him for my companion in whatever enterprise I might meditate. To this I replied: "My dearest friend Albertaccio, a time will soon come when I shall need your assistance; but on the present occasion, if you love me, do not give yourself any concern about me; only mind your own affairs, and quit the place directly, as the rest have done, for we must not trifle away time."

These words were uttered in great haste: in the meantime my enemies of the Banchi quarter had walked on slowly towards a place called Chiavica, and reached a crossway where several streets meet; but that in which stood the house of my adversary, Pompeo, led directly to the Campo di Fiore. Pompeo entered an apothecary's shop at the corner of the Chiavica, about some business, and stayed there some time: I was told that he had boasted of having bullied me; but it turned out a fatal adventure to him. Just as I arrived at that quarter, he was coming out of the shop, and his bravoes having made an opening formed a circle round him. I thereupon clapped my hand to a sharp dagger, and having forced my way through the file of ruffians, laid hold of him by the throat so quickly, and with such presence of mind, that there was not one of his friends could defend him. I pulled him towards me, to give him a blow in front, but he turned his face about through excess of terror, so that I wounded him exactly under the ear; and upon repeating my blow, he fell down dead. It had never been my intention to kill him, but blows are not always under command.

Having withdrawn the dagger with my left hand, and drawn my sword with the right, in order to defend myself, when I found that all the heroes of his faction ran up to the dead body, and that none of them advanced towards me, or seemed at all disposed to encounter me, I retreated down the street Julia, revolving within myself whither I could make my escape. When I had walked about three hundred paces, Piloto, the goldsmith, my intimate friend, came up to me, and said: "Brother, since the mischief is done, we must think of preserving you from danger." I answered him: "Let us go to Albertaccio del Bene, whom I told awhile ago that I should shortly have occasion for his assistance." As soon as we reached Albertaccio's dwelling-house, infinite caresses were lavished on me, and all the young persons of condition, of the different nations

in the quarter of Banchi, except those of Milan, made their appearance, offering to risk their lives in order to preserve mine. Signor Luigi Rucellai also sent to make me a tender of all the service in his power, as did likewise several of the nobility besides him, for they were glad that I had despatched Pompeo, from an opinion that he had insulted me past all enduring, and they expressed great surprise that I had so long been patient under accumulated injuries.

In the meantime the affair coming to the knowledge of Cardinal Cornaro, he sent thirty soldiers, and as many spear-men, pike-men, and musketeers, who were charged to conduct me to his house. I accepted the offer and went with them, accompanied by more than an equal number of the brave young fellows above mentioned. Signor Trajano, Pompeo's relation, and first gentleman of the bed-chamber, being likewise informed of the affair, sent a person of quality, of Milan, to Cardinal de' Medici, to acquaint him with the heinous crime I had committed, and excite him to bring me to condign punishment. The cardinal immediately made answer: "Benvenuto would have done very wrong not to prefer the lesser to the greater evil: I thank Signor Trajano for having informed me of what I was ignorant of." Then, in the presence of the person of quality above mentioned, he turned to the Bishop of Forli, his intimate acquaintance, and said to him: "Make diligent inquiry after my friend Benvenuto, and conduct him hither, because I intend to befriend and assist him, and shall look upon his enemies as mine." Hearing this the Milanese gentleman coloured, and left the place; but the Bishop of Forli came in search of me to Cardinal Cornaro's palace. Upon seeing his reverence, he told him that the Cardinal de' Medici had sent for Benvenuto, and proposed taking him under his protection. Cornaro, who was one of the most whimsical men breathing, flew into a violent passion, and told the bishop that he was as proper a person to take care of me as the Cardinal

de' Medici. The bishop replied that he begged it as a favour that he might be allowed to speak a word to me about some other business of the cardinal's. Cornaro made answer that he should not see me that day. The Cardinal de' Medici was highly incensed at this; however, I went the night following without Cornaro's knowledge, well guarded, to pay him a visit. I then begged it of him as a favour that he would permit me to stay with Cornaro, telling him of the great politeness with which the latter had treated me; and that if his reverence would suffer me to stay at that Cardinal's palace, I should always be sure of an additional friend in my utmost need, otherwise his reverence might dispose of me as he judged proper. He made answer that I might act as I thought fit.

I then returned to Cornaro. A few days after, Cardinal Farnese was elected pope. As soon as this new pontiff had settled other affairs of greater importance, he inquired after me, and declared that he would employ nobody else to stamp his coins. When he spoke thus, a gentleman, whose name was Signor Latino Giovenale, said that I was obliged to abscond, for having killed one Pompeo, a Milanese, in a fray: he then gave an account of the whole affair, putting it in the most favourable light for me that was possible. The pope made answer: "I never heard of the death of Pompeo, but I have often heard of Benvenuto's provocation; so let a safe-conduct be instantly made out, and that will secure him from all manner of danger." There happened to be present an intimate friend of Pompeo's, who was likewise a favourite of the pontiff: this was Signor Ambrogio, a native of Milan. This person told his Holiness that it might be of dangerous consequence to grant such favours immediately upon being raised to his new dignity. The pope instantly said: "You do not understand these matters: I must inform you that men who are masters in their profession, like Benvenuto, should not be subject to the laws: but he less than any other, for I am sensible that he was in the right

in the whole affair." So the safe-conduct being immediately made out, I entered into his service, and met with great encouragement.

About this time Signor Latino Giovenale came to me, and gave me an order to work for the Mint directly. Thereupon all my enemies rose up against me, and used their utmost endeavours to prevent me from being employed in that department. I began to make the dies for crown-pieces, upon which I represented the bust of St. Paul with this legend, *Vas Electionis.* This piece proved far more agreeable to his Holiness than those of the other artists, who worked in competition with me; insomuch that he declared that I alone should have the stamping of his coins. I therefore exerted all my diligence in my art, and Latino Giovenale introduced me occasionally to the pope, who had made choice of him for that purpose. I applied again for the place of engraver to the Mint; but the pope having asked advice upon this point, told me that I must first receive pardon for the manslaughter, which I should have by the festival of the Virgin Mary in August, by order of the Caporioni; for every year at that solemn festival, twelve persons under sentence of banishment are pardoned upon the account of those magistrates. He directed at the same time that, during this interval, another safe-conduct should be taken out in my behalf, that I might remain till then secure and unmolested.

My enemies finding that they could by no means whatever exclude me from the Mint, had recourse to another expedient to wreak their malice. Pompeo, whom I sent to the other world, having left a portion of three thousand ducats to a bastard daughter of his, they contrived to prevail upon a favourite of Signor Pier Luigi, bastard son to the pope, to marry her; which was brought about by means of that lord. This favourite was a country fellow, in narrow circumstances: it was said that he received but very little of the money, for Pier Luigi laid hands on it, and was for converting it to his own use.

But as this favourite had several times, through complaisance to his wife, requested Pier Luigi to get me taken into custody, the latter promised to bring it about, as soon as the high favour in which I was with the pope had somewhat subsided. Things continuing in this state about two months, as that servant endeavoured to get the portion paid to him, Pier Luigi avoided giving a direct answer, but told his wife that he would revenge the death of her father.

Though I knew something of what was going on, whenever I happened to appear in the presence of Pier Luigi, he was lavish of demonstrations of kindness to me: he had, notwithstanding, at the same time secretly given orders to the captain of the city-guard, either to cause me to be seized, or to get somebody to assassinate me. As he thought it most advisable to determine upon one of these two methods, he employed a cut-throat of a Corsican soldier to do the work; and my other enemies, especially Signor Trajano, promised to make the assassin a present of a hundred crowns: the latter declared thereupon, that he would make no more of it than swallowing a new-laid egg. Having heard the whole affair, I kept a constant look-out, and went always well accompanied and armed with a coat of mail, for I had received permission from the government. This bravo was so covetous, that in order to engross the whole money to himself, he thought he might undertake the murder unassisted. One day, just after dinner, they sent for me in the name of Signor Pier Luigi. I went directly, as that lord had often talked to me about several pieces of plate of new invention which he proposed to have executed. I left my house in a hurry with my usual arms, and went down the street Julia, not thinking to meet anybody at that time of day.

When I was at the top of the street, and preparing to turn towards the Farnese palace, it being customary with me to take the roundabout way, I saw this Corsican quit the place where he was sitting, and advance to the middle

of the street. Without being in the least disconcerted, I kept on my guard, and having slackened my pace a little, approached the wall as close as I could, to make way for the ruffian and the better to defend myself. He drew towards the wall, and we were near to each other, when I plainly perceived by his gestures that he had a design upon me, and seeing me alone in that manner, imagined it would succeed. I broke silence first: "Valiant soldier," said I, "if it were night-time you might possibly have mistaken me for another, but as it is broad daylight, you must be sensible who I am, and that I never had any connection with you, nor ever gave you offence, but should rather be disposed to serve you, were it in my power." Upon my uttering these words, he, with a resolute air, and without ever quitting his ground, told me that he did not know what I meant. I replied: "But I know very well what you mean; yet your enterprise is more dangerous than you are aware of, and the success may be very different from what you imagine. I must tell you that you have a man to deal with who will sell his life very dear; neither does your design become such a brave soldier as you appear to be." All this while I stood upon my guard with a stern and watchful eye, and we both changed colour. By this time a crowd was gathered about us, and the people perceived what we were talking of, so that, not having the spirit to attack me under these circumstances, he only said: "We shall see one another again." I answered: "I am always glad to see gallant men, and those who behave themselves as such."

Having left him I went to Signor Pier Luigi, but found that he had not sent for me. From thence I returned to my shop, when the bravo gave me notice, by means of a particular friend of his and mine, that I had no longer any danger to apprehend from him, since he would for the future consider me as a brother; but that I must beware of others, for many persons of distinction had sworn they would have my life. I returned him thanks by the

messenger, and kept upon my guard in the best way I could.

A few days after I was told by an intimate friend that Signor Pier Luigi had given express orders for taking me that evening: this I heard at four o'clock. I thereupon spoke to some of my friends, who advised me to make my escape without loss of time; and as the order was to be carried into execution at one in the morning, I took post at eleven for Florence. The truth is, when the soldier had miscarried in his enterprise for want of courage, Signor Pier Luigi had, by his own authority, given orders that I should be arrested, to make Pompeo's daughter easy, who was restless to know where her portion was deposited. Unsuccessful in his two first attempts to revenge the death of that woman's father, he had recourse to a third, of which I shall give the reader an account in its proper place.

CHAPTER XVI

Upon my arrival at Florence I paid a visit to Duke Alessandro, who gave me the most gracious reception, and even pressed me to stay with him. There happened to be in Florence at that time a sculptor, named Tribolo, to one of whose children I had stood godfather. In some conversations between us, he acquainted me that Jacopo del Sansovino, his first master, had sent for him to Venice; and as he had never seen that city and expected to gain considerably there, he was glad of an opportunity of making the trip. He asked me whether I had ever seen Venice. I answered in the negative; whereupon he pressed me to bear him company. I immediately accepted his proposal, and told Duke Alessandro that I intended to undertake a journey to Venice, and, upon my return, should be at his service. This he made me promise,

desiring, at the same time, that I would call upon him before my departure. I got myself in readiness the next day, and went to take my leave of the duke, whom I found at the palace of Pazzi, where the wife and daughter of Signor Lorenzo Cibo were also lodged. Having given his excellency to understand that I was just setting out for Venice, an answer was brought me by Signor Cosmo de' Medici, the present Duke of Florence, that I should go to Niccolò di Monte Aguto, to receive fifty crowns, of which his excellency made me a present, and that after I had taken my pleasure at Venice, he expected I would return to his service.

Having received the money from Niccolò, I repaired to my friend Tribolo, who was ready for his journey, and asked me whether I had bound up my sword. I told him that a man who was just mounted for a journey had no occasion for any such precaution. He replied that it was the custom in Florence, for that there was in that city a certain Signor Maurizio, who for the least offence used to plague and persecute everybody, so that travellers were obliged to keep their swords bound up till they had passed the gate. I laughed at this; so we set out with the procaccio or carrier of Venice, named Lamentone, and travelled in his company.

Having passed the other towns without stopping at any of them, we at last arrived at Ferrara, and took up our quarters at the inn in the great square. The carrier went in quest of some of the Florentine exiles, in order to deliver them letters and messages from their wives; for such was the pleasure of the duke that this fellow should speak with them; but no Florentine traveller was to take the same liberty, upon pain of being involved in their punishment. In the meantime, as it was not above six in the afternoon, Tribolo and I went to see the Duke of Ferrara come back from Belfiore, whither he was gone, to be present at a tournament. At his return we met with several of the exiles, who looked at us attentively,

as if to force us to speak to them. Tribolo, who was one of the most timorous men breathing, said to me every moment: "Neither look at nor speak to them, if you intend ever to return to Florence." So we stayed to see the duke's entrance; then going back to the inn, we found Lamentone. It was one hour after sunset when Niccolò Benintendi made his appearance, with Piero his brother, and an old man, whom I take to have been Jacopo Nardi, together with several young gentlemen. The carrier went to talk with the Florentine exiles: Tribolo and I stood at some distance to avoid their conversation. After they had chatted a considerable time with Lamentone, Niccolò Benintendi said: "I know those two men there very well. What's the reason they make such a difficulty about speaking to us?" Tribolo begged I would remain silent. Lamentone told them that we had not the same permission as he had. Benintendi swore it was all mere nonsense, and wished the devil might take us, with other imprecations. I looked up, and said in the gentlest terms I could: "Dear gentlemen, do but seriously consider that you may hurt us; but it is not in our power to be of any manner of service to you; and though you have given us language by no means becoming gentlemen, yet we are willing to overlook that affront." Thereupon old Nardi declared that I spoke like a worthy young man. Niccolò Benintendi said: "I know how to deal both with them and the duke." I answered that he had behaved very ill to us, and that we had nothing to do with him or his affairs.

Old Nardi took our part, and told Benintendi that he was in the wrong. The latter still continued to insult us with abusive language: I assured him that I would presently take such a course with him as he would not like, so he had best attend to his own business, and let us alone. He replied that he held both the duke and us in abhorrence, and that we were no better than so many jackasses. I thereupon gave him the lie, and drew my sword; the old man, who wanted to be the first to get downstairs, had not

descended many steps when he tumbled down, and all the rest fell over him. I rushed towards them, and brandishing my sword, cried out in a furious manner: "I will kill every man of you;" but I took particular care not to hurt any one, as I might easily have done. The innkeeper, hearing the noise, set up a loud outcry; Lamentone begged for quarter; one cried out: "Oh, my head!" another: "Let me get out of this cursed place." In short, there was such a most horrid uproar, you would have thought a whole herd of swine had got together. At last the innkeeper came with a light, when I drew back, and put up my sword. Lamentone told Niccolò Benintendi that he had behaved very ill: the landlord assured him that it was as much as his life was worth to wear arms in such a place. "If the duke," said he, "were to be acquainted with your insolence, he would order you to be hanged. I will not treat you as you deserve; but begone from my house, and let me see you no more, at your peril." After this speech the host came up to me, and, as I was going to make an apology for what had passed, he would not suffer me to say a word, but telling me he knew I was entirely in the right, advised me to beware of them upon the road.

As soon as we had supped, the master of a bark came to carry us to Venice. I asked him whether he would let us have the bark to ourselves, to which he agreed. In the morning we took horse betimes, to ride to the port, which is but a few miles distant from Ferrara. When we got thither, we met with the brother of Niccolò Benintendi and three of his companions, who waited my coming; they had with them two pikes, and I had purchased a fine spear at Ferrara. Being thus well armed, I was not in the least terrified, as Tribolo was, who exclaimed: "God help us! these men have waylaid us, and will murder us." Lamentone, addressing himself to me, said: "The best course you can take is to return directly to Ferrara, for I see there is great danger: my dear Ben-

venuto, avoid the fury of these savage beasts."—"Let us go on boldly," said I; "God assists those who are in the right, and you shall see how I assist myself. Is not this bark hired for us?"—"It is," answered Lamentone. I then rejoined: "We will make our passage without them, or I will die for it." I spurred my horse forward, and when I was within ten paces of them, dismounted, and boldly advanced, with my spear in my hand. Tribolo stayed behind, and had so contracted himself upon his horse that he seemed to be quite frozen. Lamentone, the carrier, who always puffed and blew in such a manner that he might have passed for Boreas, now puffed more than ever, being impatient to see how this fray was to conclude.

When I reached the bark the master told me "that there was a considerable number of gentlemen from Florence who wanted to sail in the vessel if it were agreeable to me."—"The boat," said I, "is hired for us, and for nobody else; and I am very sorry that I cannot have the pleasure of their company." To this a stout young fellow, named Magalotti, answered: "Benvenuto, we will contrive matters so as to put it in your power." I replied: "If God and the justice of my cause, together with my own arm, have any efficacy or influence, you will never be able to fulfil your promise." Having uttered these words, I leapt into the bark, and turning the point of my weapon towards them, said: "By this I will prove to you that I cannot comply with your request." In order to show that he was in earnest, Magalotti clapped his hand to his sword and made towards me, when instantly I jumped upon the side of the bark and gave him so violent a thrust that, if he had not instantly fallen flat, I should have run him through the body. His companions, instead of assisting him, retreated; and I, seeing that it was in my power to kill him, would not repeat my blow, but said: "Arise, brother, take your arms, and go about your business: I have sufficiently shown you that I can do nothing contrary

to my own will; and that which I am able to do I have not wished to do." I then called to Tribolo, the master of the bark, and Lamentone, and we set out for Venice together.

After we had sailed ten miles upon the Po, the young fellows above mentioned, having embarked in a skiff, came up with us, and when they were opposite to our boat, that fool Piero Benintendi said to me: "Benvenuto, this is not the time to decide our difference; but you are to be seen again at Venice."—"Take care of yourself," said I, "for I am going thither, and shall frequent all places of public resort."

In this manner we arrived at Venice, where I applied to a brother of Cardinal Cornaro's for permission to wear a sword. He told me that I was at liberty to do so, and the worst that could befall me was, that I might lose my sword. Thus having received permission to carry arms, we went to visit Jacopo del Sansovino the sculptor, who had sent for Tribolo: he caressed me greatly, and invited us both to dinner. In his conversation with Tribolo, he told him he had no business for him then, but that he might call another time. Hearing him speak thus, I burst out a-laughing, and said jestingly to Sansovino: "His house is at too great a distance from yours for him to call again." Poor Tribolo, quite shocked at the man's behaviour, said: "I have your letter in my pocket, inviting me to come and see you at Venice." Sansovino replied: "That such men as himself, of abilities and unexceptionable character, might do that and greater things." Tribolo shrugged up his shoulders, muttering *patience* several times. Upon this occasion, without considering the splendid manner in which Sansovino had treated me, I took my friend Tribolo's part, who was certainly in the right; and as the former had never once ceased to boast at table of his own performances, whilst he made very free with Michael Angelo and all other artists, however eminent, I was so disgusted at this behaviour that I did

not eat one morsel with appetite. I only took the liberty to express my sentiments thus: "O Signor Jacopo, men of worth act as such; and men of genius, who distinguish themselves by their works, are much better known by the commendations of others, than by vainly sounding their own praises." Upon my uttering these words, we all rose from table murmuring our discontent.

Happening the very same day to be near the Rialto, I met with Piero Benintendi, who was in company with several others, and, perceiving that they intended to attack me, I retired to an apothecary's shop till the storm blew over. I was afterwards informed that young Magalotti, to whom I had behaved so generously, had expressed a great dislike to their proceedings, and thus the affair ended.

A few days after we set out on our return to Florence. Happening to lie at a place on this side of Chioggia, on the left hand as you go to Ferrara, the landlord demanded his reckoning before we went to bed. Upon my telling him that in other places it was customary to pay in the morning, he answered: "I insist upon being paid overnight, and as I think proper." I replied: "That when people insist upon having things their own way, they should make a world of their own; but the practice of this globe of ours was very different." The landlord said: "That it did not signify disputing the matter, for he was determined it should be so." Tribolo trembled with fear, and by signs entreated me to be quiet, lest the man should do something worse: so we paid him in the manner he required, and went to bed. We had very fine new beds, with everything else new, and in the utmost elegance. Notwithstanding all this I never closed my eyes the whole night, being entirely engaged in meditating revenge for the insolent treatment of our landlord. Now it came into my head to set the house on fire, and now to kill four good horses which the fellow had in his stable. I thought it was no difficult matter to put either design in execution,

but did not see how I could easily secure my own escape and that of my fellow-traveller afterwards.

At last I resolved to put our baggage into the ferry, and requesting my companions to go on board, I fastened the horses to the rope that drew the vessel, desiring my friends not to move it till my return, because I had left a pair of slippers in the room where I lay. This being settled, I went back to the inn, and inquired for the landlord, who told me that he had nothing to say to us, and that we might all go to the devil. There happened to be a little stable-boy in the inn, who appeared quite drowsy. He told me that his master would not stir a foot for the pope himself, and asked me to give him something to drink my health; so I gave him some small Venetian coin, and desired him to stay awhile with the ferryman, till I had searched for my slippers. I went upstairs, carrying with me a little knife, which had an exceeding sharp edge, and with it I cut four beds, till I had done damage to the value of upwards of fifty crowns. I then returned to the ferry, with some scraps of bedclothes in my pocket, and ordered the person who held the cable to which the ferry was tied to set off with all speed. When we were got to some little distance from the inn, my friend Tribolo said: "That he had left behind him some little leather straps, with which he used to tie his cloak-bag, and that he wanted to go back in search of them." I desired him not to trouble his head about two little straps of leather, and assured him that I would make him as many large ones as he should have occasion for. He told me that I was very merry, but that he was resolved to return for his leather straps; but as he called out to the ferryman to stop, I bade him go on, and in the meantime told Tribolo all the damage I had done at the inn, in proof of which I produced some of the scraps of the bedclothes. He thereupon was seized with a panic so violent that he never ceased crying out to the ferryman to make haste, and did not think himself secure from danger till we arrived at the gates of Florence.

When we had thus reached our journey's end, Tribolo said to me: "Let us bind up our swords, for God's sake, and do nothing to bring us into any more scrapes, for I have been continually scared out of my wits for some days past."—"My good friend Tribolo," answered I, "you need not bind up your sword, for it was fast enough during the whole journey." This I said because he had not shown the least sign of courage upon the road. He looked at his sword, and said: "By the Lord, you say true; it is still tied up in the very same manner it was before I went from home." My fellow-traveller thought I had been a bad companion to him, because I had shown some resentment, and defended myself against those who would have used us ill; while I looked upon him in a worse light, for neglecting to assist me upon those occasions: let the impartial reader determine who was in the right.

Upon my arrival at Florence I went directly to Duke Alessandro, and returned him a great many thanks for the fifty crowns, telling his excellency that I was ready to undertake anything to serve him. He answered that he wanted me to be engraver to his mint. I accepted the offer; and the first coin I stamped was a piece of forty pence, with the duke's head on one side, and on the other, a San Cosimo, and a San Damiano. He declared that these silver coins were the finest in Christendom; and all Florence said the same. I then desired to be put into possession of the offices, with a provision, to which the duke replied that it should be done,—that I must devote myself to his service, that I should receive more than I required, and that he had given orders to Carlo Acciaiuolo, the master of the mint, to supply me with everything I should want. After that I made a stamp for the giulios, upon which I represented a head of St. John, seated, in profile, with a book in his hand, and the ducal arms upon the reverse. This was the first piece of the kind that had been ever made of so thin a plate of silver. The difficulty of such a piece of work is known only to those who are

masters of the business. I then made stamps for the gold crowns, on which a cross was represented on one side, with certain figures of little cherubim, and on the other were the duke's arms. When I had finished this job, that is, when I had stamped these four sorts of pieces, I again requested his excellency that he would provide apartments for me according to his promise, if he was satisfied with my services. He answered in the most obliging terms, "that he was perfectly satisfied, and would give the proper orders." When I spoke to him on this occasion, he happened to be in his armoury, in which was a fusil of admirable workmanship, that had been sent him from Germany. Seeing me look attentively at this fine piece, he delivered it into my hands, telling me that he knew very well how fond I was of fowling, and, as an earnest of what he proposed doing for me, he desired I would choose any other gun, except that, out of his armoury; assuring me that I should meet with some that were full as handsome and as good. I accepted of his kind offer, and returned him thanks; whereupon he gave directions to the keeper of his armoury, a young priest of Lucca, to let me have any piece I should make choice of: he then said many obliging things to me, and withdrew, to give me an opportunity of pleasing my fancy. I stayed some time behind, picked out the finest and best gun I ever saw in my life, and carried it home with me.

Two days after I waited upon him with some little sketches which I had received orders from his excellency to draw, for some works in gold; these he had given me directions to begin directly, proposing to send them as presents to his consort, who was still at Naples. I again pressed him to provide for me in the manner he had promised. He thereupon told me that I should make the mould for a fine portrait of him, as I had done for Pope Clement. I began this portrait in wax, and his excellency gave orders that at whatever hour I came to take his likeness, I should be admitted. Perceiving that the affair

hung a long time upon my hands, I sent for one Pietro Paolo of Monterotondo, in the county of Rome, whom I had known from a child: and finding that he was then in the service of one Bernardaccio, a goldsmith, who did not use him well, I took him from his master, and taught him the art of coining. In the meantime I drew the duke's likeness, and often found him taking a nap after dinner, with his kinsman Lorenzino de' Medici, who afterwards murdered him, but with nobody else. I was very much surprised that so great a prince should have so little regard to the security of his person. It came to pass that Ottaviano de' Medici, who seemed to have the general direction of affairs, showed a desire, contrary to the duke's inclination, to favour the old master at the mint, named Bastiano Cennini. This man, who adhered to the ancient taste, and knew but little of the business, had caused his ill-contrived dies to be used promiscuously with mine in stamping the crowns. This I complained of to the duke, who finding that I spoke the truth, grew very angry and said to me: "Go tell Ottaviano of this, and let him see the pieces." I went directly, and showed him the injury that was done to my fine coins: he told me bluntly that it was his pleasure to have matters conducted in that manner. I answered that it was a very improper manner, and extremely disagreeable to me. He replied: "But suppose it should be agreeable to the duke?"—"Even so I should disapprove of it," answered I, "for the thing is neither just nor reasonable." He then bade me begone, telling me I must swallow the pill were I even to burst. Upon my return to the duke, I related to him the whole contest between Ottaviano de' Medici and myself, requesting his excellency not to suffer the fine pieces which I had stamped for him to be brought into disgrace; and at the same time I desired my discharge. He then said: "Ottaviano presumes too much: you shall have what you require of me, for the insult upon this occasion is offered to myself."

That very day, which was Thursday, I received from Rome an ample safe-conduct of the pope's, directing me to repair forthwith to that city, at the celebration of the feast of the Virgin Mary in August, that I might clear myself from the charge of murder. When I waited on the duke I found him in bed; being indisposed, from some intemperance, as he told me himself. I finished in a little more than two hours what remained for me to do of his waxen medal, and he was highly pleased with it. I then showed his excellency the safe-conduct, which I had received by the pope's order, telling him at the same time that his Holiness was for employing me in some works, which would give me an opportunity of seeing once more the beautiful city of Rome, and in the meantime I would finish his excellency's medal. The duke answered, half angrily: "Benvenuto, do as I desire of you: I will provide for you and assign you apartments in the mint, with much greater advantages than you could expect from me, since what you ask is but just and reasonable. Who else do you think is able to stamp my coins like you, if you should leave me?" I replied: "My lord, I have taken care to obviate all inconveniences: I have a pupil of mine here, a young Roman, whom I have trained to my business, and who will serve your excellency to your satisfaction, till I finish the medal, and at my return I will devote myself for ever to your service. As I have a shop open in Rome, with workmen and some business, as soon as I have received my pardon at the Capitol, I intend to leave all my affairs at Rome under the care of a pupil of mine, who resides in that city, and then, with your excellency's permission, I will come back to serve you." Upon this occasion there was present Lorenzino de' Medici, to whom the duke made several signs for him to join in persuading me to stay; but Lorenzino never said more than: "Benvenuto, your best way would be to remain where you are." I made answer that I was resolved by all means to see Rome again. Lorenzino did not add another word; but

continued to eye the duke with the most malicious glances. Having finished the medal and shut it up in a little box, I said to his excellency: "My lord, you shall have reason to be satisfied, for I will make you a much finer medal than that of Pope Clement. It is natural that I should succeed better in this than in the other, as it was my first essay; and Signor Lorenzino, being a person of learning and genius, will furnish me with a device for a fine reverse." Lorenzino instantly replied: "That is the very thing I was just thinking of, to give you the hint of a reverse worthy of his excellency." The duke smiled, and looking upon Lorenzino, said: "You shall give him the subject of the reverse and he will stay with us." Lorenzino thereupon answered without hesitation: "I will think of it as soon as I possibly can: my intention is to produce something to surprise the world." The duke, who sometimes was inclined to think him a little foolish, and sometimes to look upon him as a coward, turned about in bed, and laughed at his boasts.

I then took my leave without any ceremony, and left them together. The duke, who never thought I would leave him, said nothing further. When he was afterwards informed that I had set out for Rome, he sent one of his servants after me, who overtook me at Siena, and gave me fifty gold ducats as a present from his master, desiring me to return as soon as I possibly could, and adding from Signor Lorenzino, that he was preparing an admirable reverse for the medal which I had in hand. I had left full directions to Pietro Paolo, the Roman above mentioned, in what manner to stamp the coins; but as it was a very nice and difficult affair, he never acquitted himself in it as well as I could have wished. There remained at this time above twenty crowns due to me from the mint for making the moulds.

CHAPTER XVII

In my journey to Rome I carried with me the fine gun which had been given me by Duke Alessandro, and with great pleasure made use of it several times by the way. I had a little house in the street Julia at Rome; but as it was not in order upon my arrival in that capital, I went to dismount at the house of Signor Giovanni Gaddi, a clerk of the chamber, to whose care I had at my departure committed a quantity of choice arms, and many other things upon which I set a high value. I did not, therefore, choose to alight at my own shop; but sent for my partner Felice, and desired him to set my little house in order. The day following I went to lie there, and provided myself with clothes and all other necessaries, intending the next morning to pay my respects to the pope, and thank him for all favours. I had two servant boys, and a laundress, who cooked for me incomparably.

Having in the evening entertained several of my friends at supper, and passed the time very agreeably, I went quietly to bed; but scarce had the morning dawned when I heard a violent knocking at the door. I thereupon called to the eldest of my boys, named Cencio (the very same whom I carried with me into the necromancer's circle), and bade him go and see what fool knocked at such a strange rate at that unseasonable hour. Whilst Cencio was gone I lighted another candle (for I always kept one burning by night), and immediately put over my shirt an excellent coat of mail, and over that again some clothes that accidentally came to hand. Cencio returning, said: "Alas! master, it is the captain of the city-guards, with all his followers; and he declares that if you make him wait, he will pull the door off the hinges; they have lighted torches, and a thousand implements with them."—"Go tell them," I answered, "that as soon

as I have huddled on my clothes I will come down." Thinking that it might be an attempt to assassinate me, like that already made by Signor Pier Luigi, I took an excellent hanger in my right hand, and in my left the pope's safe-conduct, and ran directly to the back window, which looked into certain gardens, where I saw above thirty of the city-guards, which convinced me that it would be impossible to make my escape on that side. Having placed my two boys before me, I directed them to be ready to open the door when I should bid them; then holding the hanger in my right hand, and my safe-conduct in my left, quite in a posture of defence, I ordered the boys to open the door, and fear nothing.

That instant, Vittorio, the captain of the city-guards, rushed in with two of his myrmidons, thinking they should find it an easy matter to seize me; but when they saw me prepared for them, they fell back, and said one to another: "This affair is no jest." I threw them the safe-conduct, and said: "Read that: you have no authority to arrest me, and I am resolved you shall not so much as touch my person." The captain of the guard ordered some of his followers to seize me, adding: "That he would examine the safe-conduct at his leisure." Upon this I was animated with new courage, and brandishing my sword, I exclaimed: "You shall not take me alive!" The place we were in was very narrow: they seemed determined to have recourse to violence, and I was resolved to defend myself. The captain perceived that there was actually no probability of getting me alive into their power. The clerk being called whilst he was reading the safe-conduct, the captain made signs two or three times to his men to lay hands on me, but they were intimidated at seeing me continue in the same posture of defence. At last giving up the enterprise, they threw the safe-conduct upon the ground, and went away without me.

I went to bed again, but found myself extremely fatigued, and could not sleep a wink afterwards. Though

I formed a resolution to get myself blooded as soon as it should be day, I asked the advice of Signor Giovanni Gaddi, who consulted his physician: the latter desired to know whether I had been frightened. Here was a pretty physician to ask such a question, after I had related an event so replete with terror. He was one of those vain triflers who are always laughing, the least thing being sufficient to put him into a merry mood; so in his usual jocular strain he bid me drink a glass of good Greek wine, be cheerful, keep up my spirits, and fear nothing. Signor Giovanni then said: "A statue of bronze or marble would have been afraid upon such an occasion, much more a man." This precious physician replied: "My lord, we are not all formed in the same manner: this is neither a man of bronze nor of marble, but of iron itself." So having felt my pulse, he burst out a-laughing, as was customary with him, and said to Signor Giovanni: "Do but feel this pulse, it is neither that of a man nor of a timorous person, but of a lion or a dragon." But I, finding my pulse immoderately high, knew what that meant, and perceived that my doctor was an ignorant quack, who had neither studied Galen nor Hippocrates; but for fear of increasing the terror and agitation I was in, I assumed an appearance of intrepidity and resolution. In the meantime, Signor Giovanni ordered dinner to be served up, and we all dined together. The company, exclusive of Signor Giovanni, consisted of Signor Luigi da Fano, Signor Giovanni Greco, Signor Antonio Allegretti, all men of profound learning, and Signor Annibale Caro, who was very young. The conversation, during the whole time that we were at table, turned upon no other topic but the gallant action which has been related above. They likewise caused the whole story to be related by my boy Cencio, who was very ready-witted, had a becoming confidence, and fine person. The lad, as he related my bold exploit, assumed the attitudes which I had thrown myself into, and repeated exactly the expressions I made

use of, constantly making me recollect some new circumstance; and as they asked him several times whether he had been afraid, he answered that they should propose the question to me, for he had been affected upon the occasion just in the same manner that I was. This trifling became at last disagreeable to me, and finding myself very much disordered, I rose from table, telling the company that I intended to change my clothes, and to dress myself, together with my boy, in blue and silk; for I proposed in four days' time, upon the festival of the Virgin Mary, to walk in procession, and that Cencio should carry before me a white torch lighted. Having left them, I went and cut out the blue clothes and a fine waistcoat of blue silk, with a little cloak of the same; and I had a cloak and a waistcoat of blue taffety made for the lad.

As soon as I had cut out the clothes, I repaired to the pope, who desired me to confer with Signor Ambrogio, as he had given orders for a work of great importance, which I was immediately to take in hand. I went directly to Signor Ambrogio, who had received a circumstantial account of the whole proceedings of the captain of the city-guard, was in the plot with my enemies to drive me from Rome, and had reprimanded the captain for not taking me; but the latter alleged in his vindication that he could not do it in defiance of a safe-conduct. This Signor Ambrogio began to talk to me of the work which the pope had proposed to him; and next desired me to commence the designs, declaring that he would afterwards provide whatever was necessary. In the meantime the festival of the Virgin Mary drew near; and as it was customary for those who had received such a pardon as mine to surrender themselves prisoners, I went again to the pope, and told his Holiness that I did not choose to be confined, but begged it as a favour of him that he would dispense with my going to prison. The pope answered that it was an established custom, and that I must conform to it. I

fell upon my knees again, and returned thanks for the safe-conduct which his Holiness had granted me; adding that I should return with it to serve my patron the Duke of Florence, who waited for me with so much eagerness and ardour of affection. Upon this his Holiness turned about to one of his confidants, and said: "Let the pardon be granted to Benvenuto without his complying with the condition of imprisonment; and let his patent be properly made out." So the free pardon being settled, the pope returned it, and caused it to be registered in the Capitol. Upon the day appointed for that purpose I walked very honourably in procession between two gentlemen, and received a full pardon.

About four days after I was attacked by a violent fever, which began with a most terrible shivering. I confined myself to my bed, and immediately concluded the disease to be mortal. I sent, however, for the most eminent physicians of Rome, amongst whom was Signor Francesco da Norcia, an old physician, and one of the greatest reputation in his business in that city. I told the physicians what I apprehended to be the cause of my disorder, and that I had desired to be let blood, but was dissuaded from it; but if it was not too late, I begged they would order me to be blooded. Signor Francesco made answer that bleeding could then be of no service, though it might have been so at first; for if I had opened a vein in time I should have had no illness, but now it would be necessary to have recourse to a different method of cure. Thus they began to treat me to the best of their knowledge, and with the utmost care. My disorder, however, gained ground daily, so that in about a week it rose to such a pitch that the physicians gave me over, and directed that whatever I desired should be given me. Signor Francesco said: "As long as there is breath in his body send for me at all hours, for it is impossible to conceive how great the power of nature is in such a young man: but in case he should faint, apply these five medicines one after another,

and send for me. I will come at any hour of the night, and should be better pleased to save his life than that of any cardinal in Rome."

Signor Giovanni Gaddi came to see me two or three times a day, and was continually handling my fine fowling-pieces, my coat of mail, and my swords, saying, "This is very fine; this again is much finer." The same of my little models, and other nick-nacks, insomuch that he quite tired my patience. With him there came one Mattio Franzesi, who seemed quite impatient till I was dead; not because he was to inherit anything of mine, but he wished for what Signor Giovanni appeared to have so much at heart. I had with me my partner Felice, of whom mention has so often been made, and who gave me the greatest assistance that ever one man afforded another. Nature was in me debilitated to such a degree, and brought so low, that I was scarcely able to fetch my breath; but my understanding was as unimpaired as when I enjoyed perfect health. Nevertheless I imagined that an old man, of a hideous figure, came to my bedside, to haul me violently into a large bark: I thereupon called to my friend Felice, and desired him to approach, and drive away the old villain. Felice, who had a great friendship for me, ran towards the bedside in tears, and cried out: "Get thee gone, old traitor, who attemptest to bereave me of all that is dear to me in life." Signor Gaddi, who was then present, said: "The poor man raves, and has but a few hours to live." Mattio observed that I had read Dante, and in the violence of my disorder was raving from passages in that author; so he continued to say, laughing, "Get hence, old villain, and do not disturb the repose of our friend Benvenuto." Perceiving myself derided, I turned to Signor Gaddi, and said to him: "My dear sir, do not think I rave: what I tell you of the old man who persecutes me so cruelly is strictly true. You would do well to turn out that cursed Mattio, who laughs at my sufferings; and since you do me the honour to

visit me, you should come in the company of Signor Antonio Allegretti, and Signor Annibale Caro, with the other men of genius of your acquaintance, who are very different in sentiment and understanding from that blockhead." Thereupon Signor Gaddi, in a jesting way, bade Mattio quit his presence for ever. However, though the fellow laughed, the jest became earnest, for Gaddi would never see him more, but sent for Signor Antonio Allegretti, Signor Lodovico, and Signor Caro.

No sooner had those worthy persons appeared, than I began to take comfort, and conversed with them awhile in my right senses. As I, notwithstanding, from time to time urged Felice to drive away the old man, Signor Lodovico asked me what I thought I saw, and what appearance the old man had. Whilst I was giving him a description of this figure, the old man pulled me by the arm, and dragged me by main force towards his horrid bark. When I had uttered the last word, I was seized with a terrible fit, and thought that the old man threw me into the vessel. I was told that whilst I was in this fainting fit I struggled and tossed about in bed, and gave Signor Gaddi abusive language, telling him that he came to rob me, and not for any good purpose; with many other ugly expressions, which occasioned great confusion to Gaddi; after which, as I was told, I left off speaking, and remained like a dead creature for above an hour.

Those that were present, imagining that the agonies of death were coming upon me, gave me over and went to their respective homes. Mattio heard the news, and immediately wrote to Florence, to Benedetto Varchi, my most intimate friend, that I had expired at such an hour of the night. That great genius, upon this false intelligence, which gained universal credit, wrote an admirable sonnet, which shall be inserted in its proper place. It was three hours before I came to myself, and all the remedies prescribed by Signor Francesco having been administered without effect, my good friend Felice flew to

the doctor's house, and knocked till he made him awake and get out of bed: he then with tears in his eyes entreated him to come and see me, as he was afraid I had just expired. Signor Francesco, who was one of the most passionate men living, answered: "To what purpose should I go? If he is dead, I am more sorry for him than yourself. Do you think, even if I should go, that I am possessed of any nostrum to restore him to life?" Perceiving however that the poor young man was going away in tears, he called him back and gave him a sort of oil to anoint the several pulses of my body, directing my little fingers and toes to be pressed hard, and that they might send for him again in case I was to come to myself. Felice, at his return, did all that he was ordered by Signor Francesco; and having in vain continued to do so until daylight, they all believed the case to be hopeless, and were just going to lay me out. In a moment, however, I came to myself, and called to Felice to drive away the old man that tormented me. Felice was for sending for Signor Francesco, but I told him that he need not send for anybody, that he had nothing more to do but to come close to me himself, for the old man was afraid of him, and would immediately quit me upon his approach. Upon Felice's coming up to the bedside, I touched him, and then my imagination was impressed, as if the old man had left me in a passion: I therefore entreated my friend to stay constantly by my bedside.

Signor Francesco then making his appearance, declared that at any rate he would save me, and that he had never in his life known a young man of so vigorous a constitution. Then sitting down to write a recipe, he prescribed perfumes, poultices, washings, unctions, and many things more, too tedious to enumerate. In the meantime I found myself in a sad perplexity, a prodigious crowd being come to see my resuscitation. There were present men of great importance, and in vast numbers, before whom I declared that what little gold and money I had (the

whole might amount to the value of about eight hundred crowns in gold, silver, jewels, and money), I desired to be made over to my poor sister, who lived at Florence, and whose name was Mona Liperata. The remainder of my effects, whether furniture, or other things, I left to my poor Felice, and fifty gold crowns besides, to purchase clothes. At these words Felice threw his arms about my neck, and protested he desired nothing but that I should recover and live. I then said: "If you wish me to live, touch me in this manner, and scold this old fellow who is so much afraid of you." When I spoke thus, some present were quite frightened, seeing that I did not rave, but spoke coherently, and to the purpose. In this manner my disorder continued, and I recovered but slowly. The kind Signor Francesco visited me four or five times a day, but I saw no more of Signor Gaddi, whom I had put into such confusion. My brother-in-law came from Florence for the legacy, but being a very worthy man, was highly rejoiced to find me alive. It was a great consolation to me to see him, and he behaved to me with the utmost kindness, declaring that his visit was with no other view but to take care of me himself; so he did for several days, and then I dismissed him, having scarce any doubt of my recovery. At his departure he left the sonnet of Signor Benedetto Varchi, which is as follows:—

SONNET UPON THE FALSE REPORT OF THE DEATH OF BENVENUTO CELLINI

Who shall, Mattio, ease our present grief?
Can streaming tears and sorrow soften death?
Can sad complaints bestow the wish'd relief?
Since our loved friend resigns his latest breath.

His soul, with all the shining graces fraught,
In early youth felt friendship's sacred flame
To tread the rugged path of virtue taught,
To mount the skies, and leave a matchless name.

O gentle shade, if in the realms of day,
Thou'rt sway'd by love or tender friendship's powers;
Hear me bewail my loss in mournful lay,
Not weep a friend transferr'd to heavenly bowers.

To blissful seats, in glories bright array'd,
Too soon, alas! thou'st wing'd thy rapid flight;
The great Creator, to full view display'd,
There without dazzling meets thy ravish'd sight.

Thus thou beholdest in yon radiant sphere,
Him, whom thy art so well depicted here.

My disorder was so exceedingly violent that there appeared no possibility of a cure, and the good Signor Francesco da Norcia had more trouble than ever, bringing me new remedies every day, and endeavouring to strengthen and repair my poor crazy frame; but notwithstanding all the pains he took, it did not appear possible for him to succeed. All my physicians were disheartened, and quite at a loss what course to follow. I was troubled with a violent thirst, but for several days observed the rules they prescribed me; while Felice, who thought his achievement great in saving my life, never quitted my bedside: at the same time the old man began to be less troublesome, though he sometimes visited me in my dreams. One day Felice happened to be out, and there were left to take care of me an apprentice and a girl named Beatrice. I asked the apprentice what had become of my boy, Cencio, and why I had never seen him there to attend me. The lad told me that Cencio had been afflicted with a more severe disorder than myself and was then at the point of death, adding that Felice had strictly enjoined them to conceal it from me. When he told me this, I was very much concerned. Shortly after, the servant Beatrice, who was a native of Pistoia, was in an adjoining room; I called and

begged of her to bring me a large crystal wine-cooler, which stood hard by full of cold water. The girl ran directly and brought it. I desired her to hold it up to my mouth, telling her that if she would let me drink a good draught I would make her a present of a new gown. Beatrice, who had stolen some things of value from me, and was apprehensive that the theft might be discovered, wished very much for my death; she therefore let me, at two draughts, swill myself with as much water as I could swallow, so that I may say without exaggeration, that I drank above a quart. I then covered myself up with the bedclothes, began to sweat, and fell asleep. Felice returning after I had slept about an hour, asked the boy how I was. He answered: "I cannot tell. Beatrice has taken the wine-cooler full of water, and he has drunk it nearly all. I do not know now whether he is dead or alive." They say that the poor young man was so affected at this intelligence that he was almost ready to drop; but seizing a stick, he soundly cudgelled the girl, exclaiming: "Ah! traitress, that you should be the cause of his death." Whilst Felice was beating and the girl screaming, I dreamt that the old man had cords in his hands, and that upon his making an attempt to bind me, Felice came upon him with an axe, which he used to such effect that the old fellow ran away, crying out: "Let me be gone; I shall be in no hurry to return." In the meantime Beatrice ran into my chamber, bawling so loud that I awoke and said: "Let the girl alone. With a design, perhaps to hurt me, she has done me more good than you, with all your kind attentions: now lend me a helping hand, for I have just had a sweat." Felice, recovering his spirits, rubbed me well, and said all he could to hearten me; and I finding myself much better, began to have hopes of my recovery. Signor Francesco soon made his appearance, and seeing me so much better, the girl crying, the apprentice running backwards and forwards, and Felice laughing, concluded from this hurry that something extraordinary had hap-

pened which was the cause of so great a change. Immediately after came in Bernardino, who had been against bleeding me in the beginning. Signor Francesco, who was a man of sagacity, could not help exclaiming: "O wonderful power of Nature! She knows her own wants: physicians know nothing!" The fool Bernardino thereupon said: "Had I drunk another flask, I had been immediately cured." Signor Francesco da Norcia, from his great experience, treated this opinion with the contempt it deserved, saying: "The devil give you good of such a notion!" and turning about to me, asked me whether I could have drunk any more. I answered that I could not, as I had completely quenched my thirst. Then addressing himself to Bernardino: "Do not you see," said he, "that nature took just what she had need of, and neither more nor less: in like manner she required what was necessary for her relief when the poor young man begged of you to bleed him. If you knew that drinking two flasks of water would save his life, why did you not say so before? you would then have had something to boast of." At these words the little doctor took himself off crestfallen, and never made his appearance again. Signor Francesco directed that I should be removed out of that apartment to a lodging upon one of the hills of Rome.

Cardinal Cornaro, having heard of my recovery, ordered me to be carried to a house which he had at Monte Cavallo. That every evening I was carefully conveyed in a sedan, well covered and wrapt up. No sooner was I arrived than I began vomiting, during which there came from my stomach a hairy worm, about a quarter of a cubit long: the hairs were very long, and the worm was most disgusting, having spots of different colours, green, black, and red—it was kept to be shown to the doctor. Signor Francesco, declaring he had never seen anything like it, addressed himself thus to Felice: "Take care of your friend Benvenuto, who is now cured: do not let him

be any way intemperate, for though he has escaped this time, another excess may occasion his death. You see his disorder was so violent that when the holy oil was brought him it was too late. I now perceive that, with a little patience and time, he will be again in a condition to produce more masterpieces of art." He then turned about to me and said: "Dear Benvenuto, be careful, and do not indulge in any excess, and as you are now recovered, I intend you shall make me an image of our Lady, whom I shall always worship for your sake." I promised to follow his advice, and asked him whether it would be safe to have myself removed to Florence. He answered that I should stay till I was a little better, and we saw how nature stood affected.

CHAPTER XVIII

HAVING waited a week, I found in myself so little alteration for the better that my patience was almost tired out, for my illness had now continued above fifty days; I resolved to delay no longer, and having accommodated myself with an open carriage, my dear friend Felice and I set out directly for Florence. As I had not written to any person, I went to my sister's, who welcomed me with tears and smiles at the same moment. The same day many of my friends came to see me, and among them Pier Landi, one of the best and dearest I ever had.

A day or two after, there came one Niccolò da Monte Acuto, who was likewise my particular acquaintance. He had heard the duke say, "It would have been better for Benvenuto if he had died, for in coming hither he has fallen into a snare, and I will never forgive him." Poor Niccolò said to me, with the tone of a man in despair, "Alas! my dear Benvenuto, what brought you hither? Did you not know that you had given offence to the duke?

I have heard him swear that you had fallen into a snare." I answered: "Signor Niccolò, I beg you will put his excellency in mind that Pope Clement was going to treat me in the same manner, and with as little reason. Let him but suffer me to recover my health thoroughly, and I shall convince him that I am the most faithful servant he ever had in his life, and that some of my enemies have prejudiced him against me."

The person that had thus brought me into disgrace with his excellency was Giorgetto Vasellai of Arezzo, the painter, in return for the many favours I had conferred on him. I had maintained him at Rome, and borne his charges, though he had turned my house topsy-turvy; for he was troubled with a sort of dry leprosy, which made him contract a habit of scratching himself continually; hence, as he lay with a journeyman of mine, named Manno, whilst he thought he was scratching himself, he tore the skin off one of Manno's legs, with his great claws, for he never pared his nails: Manno thereupon left me, and would have put him to death; but I found means to reconcile them. I afterwards got Giorgio into the service of the Cardinal de' Medici, and was always a friend to the man. In return for all these favours and acts of friendship, he told Duke Alessandro that I had spoken ill of his excellency, and had made it my boast that I should be one of the first to scale the walls of Florence, and assist his enemies against him. These words, as I understood afterwards, he dropped at the instigation of Ottaviano de' Medici, whose aim was to be revenged for the trouble given him by the duke upon occasion of my coins, and my departure from Florence. But as I knew myself entirely innocent of the charge, I was not under any sort of apprehensions: what contributed still more to make me easy was that the worthy Signor Francesco da Monte Varchi attended me with the utmost care, and had brought thither my dear friend Luca Martini, who passed the greatest part of the day with me.

In the meantime I despatched my trusty partner Felice to Rome, to look into the state of my affairs in that city. As soon as I could raise my head from the pillow, which was at the end of a fortnight, being still unable to walk, I desired to be carried into the palace of the Medici, to the little terrace, and there to be left seated till the duke should pass by. Several of my friends at court expressed great surprise that I should suffer the inconvenience of being carried in that manner, being still so very infirm; telling me that I should have waited till my health was thoroughly restored, and then have visited the duke. A great number had now gathered about me, and they all seemed to consider my being there as a sort of miracle, not so much from their having heard that I was dead, as that I should make my appearance there in such a state. I said to the gentlemen present that some malicious villain had told the duke that I had boasted I should be one of the first to scale his excellency's walls, and that I had spoken disrespectfully of him; therefore I could neither live nor die contented till I had cleared myself from the infamous aspersions cast upon me, and discovered the villain who gave rise to so black a calumny. When I spoke thus, there was gathered about me a crowd of courtiers, all of whom seemed deeply to compassionate my case, and expressed their sentiments variously concerning it: as for me, I declared my resolution never to quit the place till I had discovered my accuser. When I had uttered these words, Signor Agostino, the duke's tailor, mixing with the gentlemen belonging to the court, came up to me, and said: "If that is all you are so solicitous to know, you shall soon be satisfied." Just at that instant, Giorgetto, the painter, of whom mention has been made, passed that way. Agostino said: "There goes your accuser; whether what he says be true or false, you know best." Though I could neither stir nor move, I boldly asked Giorgetto whether it was true that he had accused me in that manner. Giorgetto answered that it was false,

and that he had never said any such thing. Agostino then replied: "Abandoned wretch, don't you know that I speak upon a certainty?" Giorgetto instantly quitted the place, declaring it was false. A short time after the duke himself appeared: I caused myself to be supported in his excellency's presence, and he stopped. I then said that I was come there for no other motive but to justify my conduct. The duke looked at me attentively, and expressing great surprise that I was still alive, bade me endeavour to show myself an honest man, and take care of my health. As soon as I had got home, Niccolò da Monte Acuto came to me, and told me that I was in the most dreadful jeopardy conceivable, such as he never should have believed; that I was a marked man; that it was most advisable therefore for me to endeavour to recover my health with all convenient speed, for danger impended over my head from a man who was to be feared. He then added: "Consider with yourself, how have you offended that good-for-nothing Ottaviano de' Medici?" I answered that I had never offended him, but that he had wronged me; so I related to him the whole affair of the mint. His reply to me was: "Go your ways, in God's name, with all the expedition possible, and make yourself quite easy, for you will have the pleasure of being revenged sooner than you desire." I made a short stay to recover my health, gave Pietro Paolo my directions with regard to stamping the coins, and then set out upon my return to Rome, without saying a word to the duke, or to anybody else.

Upon my arrival in that capital, after I had sufficiently enjoyed myself in the company of my friends, I began the duke's medal, and had in a few days engraved the head upon steel: it was the finest piece of work of the sort that ever came out of my hands. At this time I was visited at least once every day by a foolish sort of a person, named Francesco Soderini, who seeing what I was about, frequently said to me: "Cruel man, will you then immortalise

so fierce a tyrant? As you never made anything so fine before, it is evident that you are our inveterate foe, and so much a friend to that party that both the pope and he were mistaken when they would have hanged you: one was the Father, the other the Son, now beware of the Holy Ghost." It was believed for a certainty that Duke Alessandro was the son of Pope Clement. Signor Francesco further added, and even swore, that if he had had an opportunity, he would have stolen the moulds with which I made that medal. I replied that he had done well to tell me his mind, for I would take particular care he should never see them again.

I then sent to Florence to let Lorenzino know that it was time for him to send me the reverse of the medal. Niccolò da Monte Acuto, to whom I wrote on this occasion, returned for answer "that he had applied to that melancholy simpleton Lorenzino, who assured him that he thought of nothing else day and night, and that he would finish it as soon as he possibly could. He at the same time advised me not to depend upon that reverse, but devise one of my own imagination, and as soon as it was finished, carry it to Duke Alessandro. Having made a design of what appeared to me a proper reverse, I began to work upon it with all expedition. But as I had not yet thoroughly got the better of my late dreadful disorder, I frequently took the recreation of fowling. On these occasions I was accompanied by my dear friend Felice, who understood nothing of my business, but, from our being inseparable companions, it was generally thought that he must have great talents that way; so, as he was a very facetious person, we several times diverted ourselves with the reputation which he had acquired. His name being Felice Guadagni, he would sometimes play upon the word, saying, "I should have little right to be called Felice Guadagni (gains), if you had not procured me so great a reputation, that I may justly be named from gain." My answer to him was that there are two methods of

gain, the first that of gaining for ourselves, the second that of gaining for others; and that I gave him much more credit for the second method than the first, as he had gained me my life.

Such conversations as these frequently passed between us, but particularly once at the Epiphany, when we were both near the Magliana. The day was then almost spent, and I had shot a considerable number of ducks and geese; so having, as it were, formed a resolution to shoot no more that day, we made all the haste we could to Rome, and I called my dog, to whom I had given the name of Barucco. Not seeing him before me, I turned about, and saw the well-taught animal watching some geese that had taken up their quarters in a ditch. I thereupon dismounted, and having charged my piece, shot at them from a considerable distance, and brought down two with a single ball; for I never used a greater charge, and with this I seldom missed at the distance of two hundred cubits, which is more than can be accomplished by other modes of loading. Of these one was almost dead, and the other, though wounded, made an impotent attempt to fly: my dog pursued the last, and brought it to me. Seeing that the other was sinking in the ditch, I came up to it, trusting to my boots, which were tolerably high. However, upon pressing the ground with my foot, it sunk under me; and though I took the goose, the boot on my right leg was filled with water. I held my foot up in the air to let the water run out; and, having mounted, we returned to Rome with the utmost expedition; but as the weather was extremely cold, I felt my leg frozen to such a degree that I said to Felice: "Something must be done for the relief of this leg, for the pain it gives me is unsupportable." The good-natured Felice, without a moment's delay, alighted from his horse, and having collected some thistles and small sticks, was going to make a fire: in the meantime having put my hands upon the feathers of the breast of the goose, I felt them very warm; upon which I told Felice that he need

not trouble himself to make a fire; and, filling my boot with the feathers, I felt a genial warmth which invigorated me with new life.

Having again mounted our horses, we rode full speed to Rome. It was just nightfall when we arrived at a small eminence; and happening to look towards Florence, we both exclaimed in the utmost astonishment: "Great God! what wonderful phenomenon is that which appears yonder over Florence?" In figure it resembled a beam of fire, which shone with an extraordinary lustre. I said to Felice: "We shall certainly hear that some great event has occurred at Florence." By the time we arrived at Rome it was exceedingly dark; and when we were come near the Banchi quarter, not far from our own house, I going at a brisk canter, there chanced to be a heap of rubbish and broken tiles in the middle of the street, which neither my horse nor I perceived. He ascended it with precipitation; and then descending, stumbled and fell with his head between his legs; but by God's providence I escaped unhurt. The neighbours came out of their houses with lights upon hearing the noise. I had then got up, and ran to my house quite overjoyed at having received no harm, when I had been so near breaking my neck. I found some of my friends at home, to whom during supper I gave an account of my achievements in fowling, and of the strange phenomenon we had seen. They inquired what, in God's name, could be the meaning of such an appearance. "Doubtless," answered I, "some revolution must have happened at Florence." Thus we supped together cheerfully, and late the day following news was received at Rome of the death of Duke Alessandro. Thereupon several of my acquaintance came to me and said: "Your conjecture was very right that something extraordinary happened at Florence."

In the meantime Signor Francesco Soderini came trotting upon a little mule, and laughing ready to split his sides. "This," cried he, "is the reverse of the medal of

that vile tyrant, which you were promised by your friend Lorenzino de' Medici: you were for immortalising dukes, but we are for no more of them;" and went on jeering at me, as if I had been a leader of one of those factions by which men are raised to ducal authority. Just at this time came up one Baccio Bettini, who had a head as big as a bushel: even he must rally me upon the same subject, and say: "We have unduked them at last, and we will have no more dukes, though you were for immortalising them;" with a deal more such senseless prating, to which I, being in no humour to relish, replied: "O you fools! I am a poor goldsmith, and work for whoever pays me, yet you turn me into ridicule, as if I were the leader of a party. I will not, however, in return reproach you with the avarice, folly, and worthlessness of your ancestors; but I must tell you, in answer to all your insipid raillery, that before two, or at farthest three days are over, you will have another duke, and perhaps a much worse than your last."

A day or two after Bettini came again to my shop, and said: "You have no occasion to spend your money to pay messengers, since you are acquainted with events before they come to pass. What familiar spirit are you indebted to for your intelligence?" He then gave me to understand that "Cosmo de' Medici, son to Signor Giovanni, was made duke, but that he was invested with the dignity on certain conditions, which would control him in the indulgence of his caprice." I now had an opportunity of laughing at them in my turn, so I said: "The citizens of Florence have put a young man upon a mettlesome horse; they have fitted him with spurs, left the bridle to his guidance, and set him at liberty upon a fine plain, in which are flowers, fruits, and all things that can delight the senses: after this they direct him not to go beyond certain limits assigned. Now pray tell me, who has the power to prevent him, when he has an inclination to pass them? Laws cannot be prescribed to him who is master

of the law." From that time forward they ceased to molest me.

Beginning now to attend the business of my shop, I set about some jobs which were not of great importance; for I made the recovery of my health my chief care, and did not think myself yet entirely secure from a relapse. About this time the emperor returned victorious from his enterprise against Tunis, when the pope sent for me and asked my advice what sort of present he should make that prince. I answered that the most proper present to make his imperial majesty was a golden crucifix, for which I had devised a sort of ornament which would be extremely suitable, and do both his Holiness and myself great honour; having already made three small figures in gold, round, and about a span high. These were the same figures that I had begun for the chalice of Pope Clement, and which were intended to represent Faith, Hope, and Charity. Having therefore added, in wax, what was wanting at the foot of the cross, I carried it to the pope with the figure of Christ in wax, and several other elegant ornaments, with which he was highly pleased, and before I left him we agreed upon everything that was to be done, and calculated the expense of the work.

This was four hours after sunset, and the pope had given orders to Signor Latino Giovenale to supply me with money the next morning. Latino, who had a great dash of the fool in his composition, wanted to furnish the pope with a new invention, which should come entirely from himself, so that he counteracted all that his Holiness and I had settled. In the morning, when I went for the money, he said to me, in that coarse tone of presumption so peculiar to him: "It is our part to invent, yours to execute: before I left the pope last evening, we designed something much better." When he had uttered these words I did not suffer him to proceed, but said: "Neither you nor the pope can ever think of a better device than this, in which Christ is represented with His cross, so now

you may continue your courtier-like impertinence as long as you please." Without making any answer, he quitted me with great indignation, and endeavoured to get the work put into the hands of another goldsmith; but the pope was against it.

His Holiness sent for me directly, and told me "that I had given very good advice, but that they intended to make use of an office of the Virgin Mary, with admirable illuminations, which had cost the Cardinal de' Medici above two thousand crowns, and that this would be a very proper present for the empress; that the emperor should afterwards receive what I had proposed, which would be indeed a present worthy of his majesty; but now there was no time to lose, that prince being expected in about six weeks." For this book the pope desired to have a cover made of massy gold, richly chased, and adorned with a considerable number of jewels, worth about six thousand crowns: so when he had furnished me with the jewels and the gold, I immediately set about the work, and, as I used all possible expedition, it appeared in a few days to be of such admirable beauty that the pontiff was surprised at it, and conferred extraordinary favours upon me, at the same time forbidding that fool, Giovenale, to disturb me in my business.

CHAPTER XIX

When I had almost finished the work above mentioned, the emperor arrived at Rome, and a great number of grand triumphal arches were erected for his reception. He entered that capital with extraordinary pomp, which it is the province of others to describe, as I shall not treat of subjects that do not concern me. Immediately on his arrival he made the pope a present of a diamond, which had cost him twelve thousand crowns. The latter sent

for me, and putting the diamond into my hands, desired me to set it in a ring for his finger; but first to bring him the book unfinished as it was. When I carried it to his Holiness, he was highly pleased with it, and consulted me respecting the excuse to be made to the emperor for the non-completion of the work. I said "that the most plausible apology was my being indisposed, which his imperial majesty would be very ready to believe upon seeing me so pale and emaciated." The pope answered "that he highly approved of the excuse, but desired me to add, in his name, that in presenting his majesty with the book, I at the same time made him a present of myself." He suggested the words I was to pronounce, and the manner in which I was to behave; these words I repeated in his presence, asking him whether he approved of my delivery. He made answer "that if I had but the confidence to speak in the emperor's presence in the same manner, I should acquit myself to admiration." I replied "that without being in the least confusion, I could deliver not only these words, but many more, because the emperor wore a lay habit like myself, and I should feel that I was speaking to one formed like myself; but it was different when I addressed myself to his Holiness, in whom I discovered a much more awful representation of the Divine power, as well because of his ecclesiastical ornaments which were heightened with a sort of glory, as on account of his venerable and majestic age: all which circumstances made me stand much more in awe in his presence than in that of the emperor." The pope then said: "Go, my good friend Benvenuto, acquit yourself like a man of worth, and you will find your account in it."

His Holiness at the same time ordered out two Turkish horses, which had formerly belonged to Pope Clement, and were the finest that had ever been brought into Christendom. These he committed to the care of Signor Durante, his chamberlain, to conduct them to the porch of the palace, and there present them to the emperor, at the same

time directing him what to say on the occasion. We both went together, and when we were admitted into the presence of that great prince, the two horses entered the palace with so much grandeur and spirit that the emperor and all the bystanders were astonished. Thereupon Signor Durante advanced in the most awkward and ungracious manner, and delivered himself in a sort of Brescian jargon, with such hesitation, and so disagreeably, that the emperor could not help smiling. In the meantime I had already uncovered my work, and perceiving that his Majesty looked at me very graciously, I stepped forward and expressed myself thus: "Sire, our holy father, Pope Paul, sends this office of our Lady, as a present to your Majesty; it was written, and the figures of it were drawn by the ablest man that the world ever produced. He presents you likewise with this rich cover of gold and jewels, which as yet remain unfinished in consequence of my indisposition: upon this account his Holiness, together with the book, presents me also, desiring that I should come to finish the work near your sacred person, and also serve your Majesty in whatever you may require of me, so long as I live." To this the emperor made answer: "The book is highly agreeable to me, and you are so likewise; but I wish you to finish the work for me at Rome, and when it is completed, and you are thoroughly recovered, I shall be glad to see you at my court." In the course of his conversation with me, he called me by my name, which I was greatly surprised at, as in what passed between us it had not been mentioned. He told me that he had seen the button of Pope Clement's pontifical habit upon which I had designed such admirable figures. In this manner we protracted our discourse for the space of half-an-hour, talking upon many other curious and entertaining subjects. I acquitted myself upon the whole better than I expected; and when the conversation came to a pause, I bowed and retired. The emperor was then heard to say: "Let five hundred gold crowns be given to Benvenuto without delay."

The person who brought them inquired which was he that had delivered the message from the pope to the emperor. Durante thereupon came forward and robbed me of the money. I complained of this to his Holiness, who desired me to be under no apprehensions, saying he was sensible how well I had behaved, and that I should certainly have my share of his majesty's bounty.

Upon my returning to my shop I exerted myself with the utmost assiduity to finish the ring for the diamond, upon which account four of the most eminent jewellers in Rome were ordered to consult with me. The pope had been given to understand that the diamond had been set at Venice by the first artist in the world, whose name was Miliano Targhetta; and as the stone was somewhat sharp, it was thought too difficult an attempt to set it without the advice and assistance of others. I made the four jewellers highly welcome; amongst whom was a native of Milan, named Gajo. This was one of the most arrogant blockheads breathing, who pretended to great skill in what he was altogether ignorant of; the rest were men of singular modesty and merit. Gajo took the lead of the rest, and said: "Endeavour to preserve the tint of Miliano: to that, Benvenuto, you must show due respect; for as the tinting of diamonds is the nicest and most difficult article in the jeweller's business, so Miliano is the greatest jeweller the world ever produced, and this is the hardest diamond that ever was worked upon." I answered that it would be so much the more glorious for me to vie with so renowned an artist; then addressing myself to the other jewellers, I added: "You shall see now that I will preserve the tint of Miliano, and try whether I can in so doing improve it; in case I should fail of success, I will restore its former tint." The fool Gajo answered "that if I could contrive to be as good as my word, he would bow to my superior genius." When he had finished, I began to make my tints. In the composition of these I exerted myself with the utmost diligence,

and shall in a proper place inform the reader how they are made.

I must acknowledge that this diamond gave me the most trouble of any that ever before or since fell into my hands, and Miliano's tint appeared to be a masterpiece of art; however, I was not discouraged. My genius being upon this occasion in a particular manner sharpened and elevated, I not only equalled, but even surpassed it. Perceiving that I had conquered Miliano, I endeavoured to excel even myself, and by new methods made a tint much superior to my former. I then sent for the jewellers, and having given to the diamond Miliano's tint, I afterwards tinted it again with my own. I showed it to the artists, and one of the cleverest amongst them, whose name was Raffaello del Moro, took the stone in his hand, and said to Gajo: "Benvenuto has surpassed Miliano's tint." Gajo, who could not believe what he heard, upon taking the jewel into his hand cried out: "Benvenuto, this diamond is worth two thousand ducats more than it was with Miliano's tint." I replied: "Since I have surpassed Miliano, let me see whether I cannot outdo myself." Having requested them to have patience a few moments, I went into a little closet, and unseen by them gave a new tint to my diamond; upon showing it to the jewellers, Gajo instantly exclaimed: "This is the most extraordinary case I ever knew in my life; the diamond is now worth above 18,000 crowns, and we hardly valued it at 12,000." The other artists turning about to Gajo, said to him: "Benvenuto is an honour to our profession; it is but just that we should bow to the superiority of his genius and the excellence of his tints." Gajo made answer: "I will go and inform the pope in what manner he has acquitted himself; and contrive so that he shall receive a thousand crowns for setting this diamond." Accordingly he waited on his Holiness and told him all he had seen: the pontiff thereupon sent three times that day to inquire whether the ring was finished.

Towards evening I carried it to him; and as I had free

access, and was not obliged to observe any ceremony, I softly lifted up a curtain, and saw his Holiness with the Marquess del Vasto, who would fain persuade him to something he did not approve of. I heard the pope say to the marquess: "I tell you no, for it is proper that I should be neuter in the affair." As I immediately drew back, the pope himself called to me; upon which I advanced and put the fine diamond into his hand: his Holiness then took me aside, and the marquess retired to some distance. The pope, whilst he was examining the diamond, said to me: "Benvenuto, pretend to talk to me of some subject of importance, and never once leave off whilst the marquess stays in this apartment." So choosing the subject that was most interesting to myself, I began to discourse of the method which I had observed in tinting the diamond. The marquess stood leaning on one side against a tapestry-hanging; sometimes he turned round on one foot, sometimes on the other. The subject of this conversation of ours was of such consequence, that we could have talked upon it three hours. The pope took such delight in it that it counterbalanced the disagreeable impression which the conference with the marquess had made upon his mind. As I mixed with our conversation that part of natural philosophy which is connected with the jeweller's art, our chat was protracted almost the space of an hour, and the marquess's patience was so worn out that he went away half angry. The pope then showed me great demonstrations of kindness, and concluded with these words: "My dear Benvenuto, be diligent in your business, and I will reward your merit with something more considerable than the thousand crowns which Gajo told me you deserved for your trouble."

I took my leave, and his Holiness praised me afterwards in the presence of his domestic officers, amongst whom was Latino Giovenale, who, being now become my enemy, endeavoured to do me all the ill offices in his power. Perceiving that the pope spoke of me so advantageously, he

said: "Benvenuto indeed is acknowledged to be a person of extraordinary talents; but though it is natural for every man to be partial to his own countrymen, and give them the preference, still the manner of speaking to so great a personage as a pope deserves a proper degree of attention. He has had the boldness to declare that Pope Clement was the handsomest prince that ever existed, and that his virtues and abilities were worthy of his majestic person, though he had adverse fortune to struggle with. This man at the same time affirms that your Holiness is quite the reverse, that your triple crown does not sit well on your head, and that you appear to be nothing more than a sheaf of straw dressed up, though you have always had prosperous fortune." These words were pronounced in so emphatical a manner by the person that spoke them, who knew very well how to give them a proper emphasis, that the pope believed him. I had, notwithstanding, neither uttered such words, nor had it ever come into my head to make any such comparison. If the pope had had it in his power to do it without hurting his character, he would certainly have done me some great injury, but being a man of understanding, he pretended to turn the thing into a jest: yet he bore me an inconceivable grudge in his heart, and I soon began to perceive it; for I had no longer the same easy access to him as formerly, but found it exceedingly difficult to be admitted into his presence. As I had long frequented his court, I immediately concluded that somebody had been doing me ill offices with him, and upon my artfully tracing the affair to its source, I was told all, but could not discover the person who had thus traduced me. I for my part was incapable of guessing who it was: had I come to know the villain I should have wreaked an ample revenge.

In the meantime I worked at my little book with the utmost assiduity, and when I had finished it, carried it to the pope, who upon seeing it could not contain himself, but extolled it to the skies. I thereupon reminded him of his

promise of sending me with it to the emperor. He made answer that he would do what was proper, and that I had done my part. He then gave orders that I should be well paid for my trouble. However, for the different works upon which I had been employed two months, I was paid five hundred crowns, and no more. All the great promises that had been made me were totally forgotten. I received for the diamond a hundred and fifty crowns only; the remainder I had for the little book, for which I deserved above a thousand crowns, as the work was rich in figures, foliages, enamel, and jewels. I took what I could get, and formed a resolution to quit Rome directly. His Holiness sent the book to the emperor, by a nephew of his, named Signor Sforza: that great prince was so pleased with the present as to bestow excessive praises on it, and immediately inquired after me. Signor Sforza, having received proper instructions, made answer that an indisposition had prevented my waiting upon his imperial majesty; for I was afterwards informed of all that had passed upon the occasion.

Having in the meantime got myself in readiness for a journey to France, I proposed visiting that kingdom unaccompanied; but could not do as I intended on account of a youth who lived with me, and whose name was Ascanio. This young person was the best servant in the world: when I took him into my house he had just left a master, named Francesco, who was a Spanish goldsmith. I was unwilling to receive the lad for fear of having some dispute with the Spaniard, and therefore told him that I could not receive him, lest his master should be offended. At last the young man contrived to get his master to write me a letter, intimating that he had no objection to his entering into my service. He passed several months with me as meagre and lean as a skeleton. We called him the old man, and I thought that he was in fact old, as well because he was so good a servant, and so knowing, as because it did not appear probable that at the age of

thirteen (for he said he was no more) he should be possessed of such maturity of understanding. To return to my subject: the young man in a few months began to improve in his person, and, getting into a good plight, was become the handsomest young fellow in Rome. As I found him so good a servant, and so apt and ready in learning my business, I conceived as great an affection for him as if he had been my son, and kept him as well dressed as if I had really been his father. Seeing himself so much altered for the better, he thought himself very happy in falling into my hands, and went several times to return thanks to his old master, who had been the cause of his good fortune. The Spaniard had a handsome young wife, who frequently said to Ascanio: "My lad, how have you contrived to grow so handsome?" (for it was customary with them to call him lad at the time that he lived with them). Ascanio answered: "Donna Francesca, it is my new master I am obliged to for this improvement in my person, and in everything else." The malicious woman was not well pleased that Ascanio should praise me: however, being loosely inclined, she stifled her resentment so as to caress the youth a little more perhaps than was consistent with the laws of strict virtue; and I quickly perceived that he went much oftener to see his mistress than had been usual.

It happened one day that he struck one of my apprentices, who, upon my return home, for I had been out at that time, complained to me that Ascanio had beaten him without his having given him any sort of provocation. I thereupon said to Ascanio: "Never presume again to strike anybody that belongs to my family, either with or without provocation, for, if you do, I will make you feel the weight of my arm." To this he made a pert answer; so I immediately fell upon him, and laying on both with my hands and feet, gave him the severest correction he had ever received in his life. As soon as he could get out of my grasp he ran from the house, without either cloak or hat,

and for two days after I neither knew nor inquired what was become of him. At length a Spanish gentleman, named Don Diego, came and desired to speak to me. This was one of the most generous men I had ever known in my life. I had executed several orders for him, and had then some in hand; in a word, he was my very good friend. He gave me to understand that Ascanio had returned to his old master, and desired I would please to let him have his cloak and hat. I answered that Francesco had behaved very ill, and acted in a very unpolite and ungentlemanlike manner; adding that if he had sent me word, immediately upon Ascanio's repairing to him, that he had taken refuge at his house, I should have been very ready to have discharged him; but that as he had kept him two days without ever letting me know anything of the matter, I was determined the lad should not stay with him, but insisted that upon no account he should keep him any longer in his house.

Don Diego told what I had said to Francesco, who only turned it into a jest. The next morning I saw Ascanio employed upon some little trifling nick-nacks in his master's shop. As I passed by he made me a bow, and his master burst out a-laughing: he then sent to me Don Diego, the gentleman above mentioned, to desire I would let Ascanio have the clothes which I had given him; but that if I chose to do otherwise, he did not care, for the lad should never want for clothes. Hereupon I turned to Don Diego, and said: "Signor Don Diego, I never in my life knew a more generous or a more worthy man than yourself, nor a person of greater integrity, or more just in all his dealings: but this Francesco is the very reverse of you in every respect; he is one of the most worthless scoundrels breathing. Tell him from me that if he does not, before the bell rings for vespers, bring back Ascanio to my shop himself, I am determined I will have his life; and tell Ascanio that if he does not quit the place where he is, in the time which I have allotted his master, he

must expect the same fate." Don Diego made no reply; but, instantly departing, repeated all I had said to Francesco, who, upon hearing this intelligence, was frightened out of his wits, and did not know what to resolve upon. In the meantime Ascanio went in quest of his father, who was just arrived at Rome from Tagliacozzo, the place of his nativity. Upon hearing the disturbance that had happened, he was the first to advise Francesco to bring back Ascanio to me. Francesco said to Ascanio: "Go yourself, and your father will go with you." Don Diego then interfered, saying: "Francesco, I see impending danger: you know better than I do what sort of a man Benvenuto is. Carry the boy back to him without any sort of apprehension, and I will accompany you."

I had now got myself in readiness, and was walking to and fro in my shop, intending to wait till the bell rang for vespers; and then to make this one of the most desperate affairs I had ever been concerned in, during the whole course of my life. Just then entered Don Diego, Francesco, Ascanio, and his father, whom I did not know. Upon Ascanio's entering I looked angrily at them all, when Francesco, who was as pale as death through fear, said: "I have here brought you back your servant Ascanio, whom I entertained in my house without any intention to offend you." Ascanio then said, in a respectful manner: "Master, forgive me; I am come here to submit to whatever you shall please to enjoin." I asked him whether he was come to serve out the time he had agreed to. He answered that he was, and never to leave me more. I then turned about to the apprentice whom he had beaten and bade him reach him that bundle of clothes, saying at the same time: "Here are all the clothes that I gave you; with these I likewise restore you to your liberty, so you may go wherever you think proper." Don Diego, who by no means expected this, was in the utmost astonishment. At the same time both Ascanio and his father entreated me to forgive and take him again into my service. Upon

my asking him who the person was that pleaded his cause, he told me it was his father, to whom, after much entreaty, I said: "As you are his father, I am willing, upon your account, to take him again into my service."

CHAPTER XX

I HAD formed a resolution to set out for France, as well because I perceived that the pope's favour was withdrawn from me, by means of slanderers, who misrepresented my services, as for fear that those of my enemies who had most influence might still do me some greater injury: for these reasons I was desirous to remove to some other country, and see whether fortune would there prove more favourable to me. Having determined to set out the next morning, I bid my faithful Felice enjoy all I had as his own till my return; and in case I should never come back, my intention was that the whole should devolve to him. Happening at this time to have a Perugian journeyman, who assisted me in the last-mentioned work for the pope, I paid him off and dismissed him my service. The poor man entreated me to let him go with me, offering to bear his own expenses: he observed to me, moreover, that if I should happen to be employed for any length of time by the King of France, it was proper I should have Italians in my service, especially such as I knew, and were most likely to be of use to me. In a word, he used such persuasions that I agreed to carry him with me upon his own terms. Ascanio happening to be present at this conversation, said to me, with tears in his eyes: "When you took me again into your service I intended it should be for life, and now I am resolved it shall." I answered that it should not be so upon any account. The poor lad was then preparing to follow me on foot. When I perceived that he had formed such a resolution, I hired a horse for him

likewise, and having put my portmanteau behind him, took with me a great deal more baggage than I should otherwise have done.

Leaving Rome, I bent my course to Florence, from whence I travelled on to Bologna, Venice, and Padua. Upon my arrival at the last city, my friend, Albertaccio del Bene, took me to his own house from the inn where I had put up. The day following I went to pay my respects to Signor Pietro Bembo, who had not then been made a cardinal. He gave me the kindest reception I had ever met with; and said to Albertaccio, "I am resolved that Benvenuto shall stay here with all his company, if there were a hundred in number; so make up your mind to stay here with him, for I will not restore him to you upon any account." I stayed accordingly to enjoy the conversation of that excellent person. He had caused an apartment to be prepared for me, which would have been too magnificent even for a cardinal, and insisted upon my sitting constantly next to him at table: he then intimated to me in the most modest terms he could think of, that it would be highly agreeable to him if I were to model his likeness. There was, luckily for me, nothing that I desired more; so, having put some pieces of the whitest stucco into a little box, I began the work, working the first day two hours without ceasing. I made so fine a sketch of the head that my illustrious friend was astonished at it; for though he was a person of immense literature, and had an uncommon genius for poetry, he had not the least knowledge of my business; for which reason he thought that I had finished the figure when I had hardly begun it, insomuch that I could not make him sensible that it required a considerable time to bring it to perfection. At last I formed a resolution to take my own time about it, and finish it in the completest manner I could; but as he wore a short beard, according to the Venetian fashion, I found it a very difficult matter to make a head to please myself. I, however, finished it

at last, and it appeared to me to be one of the most complete pieces I had ever produced. He seemed to be in the utmost astonishment; for he took it for granted that as I had made it of wax in two hours I could make it of steel in ten; but when he saw that it was not possible for me to do it in two hundred, and that I was upon the point of taking my leave of him in order to set out for France, he was greatly concerned, and begged I would make him a reverse for his medal, and that the device should be the horse Pegasus, in the midst of a garland of myrtle. This I did in about three hours, and it was finished in an admirable taste: he was highly pleased with it, and said: "Such a horse as this appears to be a work ten times more considerable than that little head, upon which you bestowed so much pains: I cannot possibly account for this." He then desired me to make it for him in steel, and said: "I hope you will oblige me; you can do it very soon if you will." I promised him that, though it did not suit me to make it there, I would do it for him without fail at the first place at which I should happen to fix my residence.

After this conversation I went to bargain for three horses which I had occasion for on my journey to France. My illustrious host, who had great interest in Padua, secretly befriended me on this occasion; insomuch that when I was going to pay for the horses, for which I had agreed to give fifty ducats, the owner of them said to me: "In consideration of your merit, sir, I make you a present of the three horses." I answered: "It is not you who make me the present; and I do not choose to accept it of the real donor, because I have not earned it by my services." The good man told me that if I did not take those horses I could not get any others in Padua, but should be under a necessity of walking. I thereupon went to the munificent Signor Pietro, who affected to know nothing at all of the matter, but loaded me with caresses, and used his utmost persuasions to prevail upon me to stay at Padua.

I, who would by no means hear of this, and was determined to perform the journey at any rate, found myself obliged to accept of the three horses, and with them instantly set out for France.

I took the road through the Grisons, for it was unsafe to travel any other way, on account of the war. We passed the two great mountains of Alba and Bernina (it was then the eighth of May, and they were, nevertheless, covered with snow), at the utmost hazard of our lives. When we had travelled over them, we stopped at a little town, which, as nearly as I can remember, is called Valdistà [Walenstadt], and there took up our quarters. In the night a courier arrived from Florence, whose name was Busbacca. I had heard this courier spoken of as a man of character, and clever at his business, but did not know that he had then forfeited that reputation by his knavery. As soon as he saw me at the inn, he called me by my name, and said that he was going about some business of importance to Lyons, and begged I would be so good as to lend him a little money to defray the expense of his journey. I answered that I could not lend him money, but if he would travel in my company I would bear his charges as far as Lyons. The rogue then began crying, and counterfeited great concern, telling me that when a poor courier, who was about business of importance to the nation, happened to be in want of cash, it was the part of a man like me to assist him. He told me at the same time that he was charged with things of great value belonging to Signor Filippo Strozzi; and as he had a casket with a leather cover, he whispered me very softly that there were jewels to the amount of many thousand ducats in it, together with letters of the utmost consequence from Signor Filippo Strozzi. I thereupon desired him to let me fasten the jewels somewhere about his body, which would be running less hazard than carrying them in the casket; at the same time he might leave the casket, worth, perhaps, ten crowns, to me, and I would assist him as

far as five-and-twenty. The fellow made answer that he would travel with me in that manner, since he had no other remedy, for it would do him no honour to leave the casket; and so we were both agreed.

Setting out betimes in the morning, we arrived at a place situated between Valdistate [Walenstadt] and Vessa [Weesen], where there is a lake fifteen miles long, upon which we were to sail to Vessa. When I saw the barks, I was terribly frightened, because they are made of deal boards, neither well nailed together nor even pitched; and if I had not seen four German gentlemen, with their horses, in one of them, I should never have ventured on board, but have turned back directly. I thought within myself, at seeing the stupid security of these gentlemen, that the waters of the German lakes did not drown the passengers like those of Italy. My two young fellow-travellers said to me: "Benvenuto, it is a dangerous thing to enter one of these barks with four horses." My answer to them was: "Don't you see, you poor cowards, that those four gentlemen have entered one before you, and that they sail away merrily? If it were a lake of wine, I should fancy that they were rejoiced at the thoughts of being plunged into it; but as it is a lake of water only, I take it for granted they have no more inclination to be drowned in it than ourselves." This lake was fifteen miles long, and about three broad: the country, on one side, was a lofty mountain, full of caverns; on the other it was level, and covered over with grass.

When we had advanced about four miles, it began to grow stormy, insomuch that the watermen called out to us for help, begging that we would assist them in rowing; and so we did for a time. I signified to them soon after that their best way was to make the opposite shore; but they affirmed it to be impossible, because there was not a sufficient depth of water, so that the bark would be soon beaten to pieces in the shallows, and we should all go to the bottom. They, however, still importuned us to

lend them a hand, and were constantly calling out to each other for assistance. As I perceived them in such terror and jeopardy, having a good horse on board, I put on its bridle, and held it in my left hand. The horse, by a kind of instinct, and intelligence, common to these animals, seemed to perceive my intention; for by turning his face towards the fresh grass, I wanted him to swim to the opposite shore, and carry me over upon his back. At the very same instant there poured in from that side a wave so large that it almost overwhelmed the vessel. Ascanio then crying out: "Mercy! help me, dear father!" was going to throw himself upon me; but I clapped my hand to my dagger, and bid the rest follow the example I had set them, since by means of their horses they might save their lives, as I hoped to save mine, adding that I would kill the first who should offer to throw himself upon me.

In this manner we proceeded several miles in the most imminent danger of our lives. When we had advanced about half-way, we saw a piece of level ground under the foot of a mountain, where we might get ashore and refresh ourselves. Here the four German gentlemen landed. But upon our expressing a desire to go on shore, the watermen would not consent to it upon any account. I then said to my young men: "Now is the time, my boys, to show your spirit; clap your hands to your swords, and compel them to land us." We effected our purpose with great difficulty, as they made a long resistance; however, even after we had landed, we were obliged to climb a steep mountain for two miles, which was more difficult than going up a ladder of equal height. I was armed with a coat of mail, had heavy boots, with a fowling-piece in my hand, and it rained as hard as it could pour. Those devils of Germans ascended at a surprising rate with their horses, whilst ours were quite unequal to the task, and ready to sink with the fatigue of climbing the rugged steep.

When we had mounted a good way, Ascanio's horse, which was a fine Hungarian courser, had got a little

before Busbacca, the courier, and the young man had given him his pike to carry. It happened through the ruggedness of the road that the horse slipped, and went staggering on in such a manner, being quite helpless, as to come in contact with the point of the courier's pike, which he could not keep out of the way, and which ran into the beast's throat and killed it. My other young man, in attempting to help his brown nag, slipped down towards the lake, but saved himself by catching at a very small vine-branch. Upon this horse there was a cloak-bag, in which I had put all my money, with whatever else I had most valuable, to avoid being under a necessity of carrying it about me. I bid the youth endeavour to save his life, and never mind what became of the horse: the fall was above a mile, and he would have tumbled headlong down into the lake. Exactly under this place our watermen had stationed themselves, so that if the horse had fallen it would have come directly down upon their heads. I was before all the rest, and waited to see the horse tumble, which seemed without the least fear to go headlong to perdition. I said to my young men: "Be under no sort of concern: let us endeavour to preserve ourselves, and return thanks to God for all His mercies. I am most sorry for poor Busbacca, who has lost a casket of jewels to such an enormous amount. Mine is only a few paltry crowns." Busbacca told me he was not concerned for his own loss, but for mine. I asked him why he was sorry for my trifling loss, and not for his own, which was so considerable. He then answered in a passion: "In such a case as this, and considering the terms we are upon, it is proper to tell the whole truth. I knew that you had a good heap of ducats in the cloak-bag: as for my casket, which I affirmed to be full of jewels and precious stones, it is all false: there is nothing in it but a little caviare." When I heard this I could not help laughing; the young fellow laughed also; as for Busbacca, he lamented and expressed great concern for my loss.

The horse made an effort to relieve and extricate itself, when we had let it go, so that it was happily saved. Thus laughing, and making ourselves merry, we again exerted our strength to ascend the steep mountain.

The four German gentlemen who had got to the summit of the craggy precipice before us, sent some peasants to our assistance. At last we arrived at the miserable inn, wet, tired, and hungry. We were received in the kindest manner by the people of the house, and met with most comfortable refreshment. The horse which had been so much hurt was cured by means of certain herbs of which the hedges are full; and we were told that if we constantly applied those herbs to the wound the beast would not only recover but be of as much use to us as ever: accordingly we did as we were directed. Having thanked the gentlemen, and being well refreshed and recovered of our fatigue, we left the inn, and continued our journey, returning thanks to God for preserving us from so great and imminent a danger. We arrived at a village beyond Vessa, where we took up our quarters: here we heard the watch sing at all hours of the night very agreeably; and as the houses in town were of wood, he was constantly bidding them take care of their fires. Busbacca, who had been greatly frightened in the daytime, was continually crying out in his dreams: "O God, I am drowning!" This was occasioned by his panic the day before, and by his having indulged in the bottle too freely, and drunk with all the Germans. Sometimes he roared out, "I am burning;" sometimes "I am drowning;" and sometimes he thought himself in hell suffering punishment for his sins. This night passed away so merrily that all our anxiety and trouble were converted into laughter.

Having risen very early next morning, we proceeded on our journey, and went to dine at a very agreeable place called Lacca [Lachen], where we met with the best of treatment. We then took guides to conduct us to a town called Zurich. The guide who attended me passed

over a dyke which was overflowed, so that the stupid creature slipped, and both the horse and he tumbled into the water. I, who was behind, having that instant stopped my horse, stayed awhile to see him rise, and behold, the fellow, as if nothing at all had happened, fell a-singing again, and made signs to me to go on. I thereupon turned to the right, and breaking through certain hedges, served as a guide to Busbacca and my young men. The guide began scolding, telling me in the German language that if the country people saw me they would put me to death. We travelled on, and escaped this second danger.

Our next stage was Zurich, a fine city, which may be compared to a jewel for lustre, and there we stayed a day to rest ourselves. We left it early in the morning, and arrived at another handsome town called Solothurn. From thence we proceeded to Lausanne, Geneva, and Lyons. We stopped four days at this last city, having travelled thither very merrily, singing and laughing all the way. I enjoyed myself highly in the company of some of my friends; was reimbursed the expenses I had been at; and at the expiration of four days set out for Paris. This part of our journey was exceedingly agreeable, except that, when we came as far as Palesse, a gang of freebooters made an attempt to assassinate us, and with great difficulty we escaped them. From thence we continued our journey to Paris, without meeting any ill accident, and travelling on in uninterrupted mirth, arrived safely at that metropolis.

CHAPTER XXI

After having rested myself a short time, I went in search of Rosso the painter, who was then in the service of King Francis. I took it for granted that this man was one of the best friends I had in the world, because I had in Rome behaved to him in as obliging a manner as it is possible

for one person to behave to another; and as a concise account may be sufficient to convey an idea of my conduct to the reader, I will here lay the whole before him, that the sin of ingratitude may appear in its most odious and shocking colours.

When he was at Rome he endeavoured to depreciate the works of Raffaello da Urbino, at which his scholars were provoked to such a degree that they were bent on killing him: this danger I preserved him from, watching over him day and night with the greatest fatigue imaginable. Upon another occasion he had spoken ill of Signor Antonio da San Gallo, an excellent architect; in consequence of which the latter soon had him turned out of an employment which he had procured for him from Signor Agnolo da Cesi, and from that time forward became so much his enemy that he would have starved if I had not often lent him ten crowns for his support. As he had never discharged this trifling debt I went to pay him a visit, being informed that he was in the king's service, and thought he would not only return me my money, but do all that lay in his power in recommending me to the service of the great monarch. But the fellow no sooner saw me than he appeared to be in a terrible confusion, and said: "My friend Benvenuto, you have put yourself to too great an expense to come so long a journey, especially at such a time as this, when the court is entirely taken up with the approaching war, and can give no attention to our trifling performances." I answered that I had brought with me money enough to bear my expenses back to Rome, in the same manner that I had travelled to Paris, adding that he made me a very indifferent return for all I had suffered on his account, and that I began to believe what Signor Antonio da San Gallo had told me concerning him. Upon his turning what I said into a jest, I saw through his low malice, and showed him a bill of exchange for 500 crowns addressed to Ricardo del Bene. The wretch was greatly ashamed, and would have detained me in a manner by

force; but I laughed at him, and went away in the company of a painter who happened to be then present. His name, was Sguazzella, and he was a Florentine likewise. I went to lodge and board at his house, having with me three horses and three servants. I met with the best of treatment there, and paid liberally for it.

I afterwards solicited an interview with the king, to whom I was introduced by Signor Giuliano Buonaccorsi, his treasurer. I had to wait a long time, as I did not know that Rosso had exerted himself to the utmost to prevent my speaking to his majesty. But as soon as Signor Giuliano perceived this, he carried me with him to Fontainebleau, and introduced me into the presence of the monarch, of whom I had a most favourable audience a whole hour. The king was preparing for a journey to Lyons, which made him desire Signor Giuliano to take me with him, adding that we should discourse by the way of some fine works which his majesty intended to have executed. So I travelled in the retinue of the court, and cultivated the friendship of the Cardinal of Ferrara, who had not as yet received the scarlet hat. I had every evening a long conversation with this great personage, who told me that I should stay at Lyons at an abbey of his, and there enjoy myself till the king returned from the campaign, adding that he himself was going to Grenoble, and that I should find all proper accommodation at his abbey at Lyons.

Upon our arrival at that city I was taken ill, and Ascanio found himself attacked by a quartan ague; I now began to dislike the French and their court, and to be in the utmost impatience to return to Rome. The cardinal seeing me resolved to go back, gave me a sum of money to make him a basin and a cup of silver. Things being thus settled, my young man and I set out for Rome, extremely well mounted.

As we crossed the mountains of the Simplon, I happened to fall into the company of some Frenchmen, with whom

we travelled part of the way! Ascanio had his quartan ague, and I a slow fever, which I thought would never leave me. My stomach was so much out of order that for four months I hardly ate a roll a week, and was very eager to get to Italy, choosing rather to die in my own country than in France. When we had passed the mountains of the Simplon above mentioned, we came to a river hard by a place called Isdevedro. This river was very broad and deep, and had a long narrow bridge over it without any rails. A shower had fallen in the morning, so that when I came to the bridge, which was some time before the rest, I perceived it to be very dangerous: I therefore ordered my young men to dismount, and lead their horses. Thus I safely got over, and rode on, talking to one of the Frenchmen, who was a person of condition. The other, who was a scrivener, stayed behind us, and laughed at the French gentleman and me, for being so fearful about nothing as to take the trouble of walking. I turned about, and seeing him at the middle of the bridge, begged of him to come on cautiously, as the place was exceedingly dangerous: the other, keeping up to the national character of his country, told me in French that I was a poor, timid creature, and that there was no danger at all. Whilst he uttered these words, he spurred his horse a little, which, instantly stumbling, fell close by the side of a great rock; but as God is very merciful to fools, the stupid rider and his horse both tumbled into a great hole.

As soon as I perceived this, I began to run as fast as I could, and with great difficulty got upon the rock; from this I reached down, and catching at the border of the scrivener's cloak, pulled him up by it, whilst the water still ran from his nostrils; for he had swallowed a great quantity of it, and narrowly escaped being drowned. Seeing him at last out of danger I congratulated him on his escape, and expressed my joy at having saved his life. He answered in French that I had done nothing at all, and the point of most importance was his having lost a

bundle of papers, to the value of many a score crowns; and this he seemed to say in anger, being still wet, and his clothes all dripping with water. I turned about to our guides, and desired them to help the fool, telling them I would pay them for their trouble. One of the men exerted himself to the utmost, and fished up his papers, so that the scrivener lost nothing. The other would put himself to no trouble to assist him or save his bundle, and therefore deserved no recompense.

When we were arrived at the place above mentioned, we had made up a purse amongst us, which was to be at my disposal. After dinner I gave several pieces out of the common purse to the guide who had helped the scrivener: the latter said that I might be liberal of my own, for he did not intend to give the man anything more than was in our agreement for conducting us. This provoked me to give the sordid wretch much opprobrious language. The other guide, who had taken no trouble, came up, and insisted on sharing the reward; when I told him that he who had borne the cross deserved the recompense, he answered that he would soon show me a cross at which I should bewail my folly. I told him that I would light a candle at that cross, by means of which I hoped that he should be the first who would have cause to weep.

As we were then upon the confines of the Italian and German territories, the fellow ran to alarm the neighbourhood, and returned with a hunting-pole in his hand, followed by a crowd. I being still on horseback, cocked my piece, and turning about to my fellow-travellers, said: "I will begin with shooting that man, and do you endeavour to do your duty: these fellows are cut-throats and common assassins, who catch at this opportunity to rob and murder us." The innkeeper, at whose house we had dined, then called to one of the ringleaders of the band of ruffians, who was a man advanced in years, and begged he would endeavour to prevent the mischief likely to ensue, telling him that they had a young man of great spirit to deal

with; that even if they were to cut me to pieces, I should be sure to kill a number of them first; and that after all I might very probably escape out of their hands, and even kill the guide. Thereupon the old ruffian said to me: "Go your ways; you would have enough to do to cope with us, even if you had a hundred men to back you." I, who was aware that he spoke the truth, and finding resolution in despair, had determined to sell my life as dear as I could, shook my head and answered I should have done my best, and endeavoured to show myself a man.

We continued our journey, and as soon as we put up in the evening, we settled accounts with regard to our common purse. I separated from the sordid scrivener with the utmost contempt, whilst I had a great esteem for the other Frenchman, who was in every respect a gentleman. Soon afterwards I arrived at Ferrara, accompanied only by my two fellow-travellers on horseback.

I had no sooner dismounted than I went to pay my respects to the duke, that I might set out next morning for our Lady of Loretto. After I had waited till it was dark, the duke made his appearance. I kissed his hand, and he received me with all possible demonstrations of kindness, desiring me to stay to supper. I answered him in the politest manner: "Most excellent sir, for these four months past I have eaten so little that it is almost a wonder I should be alive; as I am, therefore, sensible that I can eat nothing that is served up to your table, I will pass away the time you are at supper in chat, which will prove more agreeable to us both than if I were to sup with your excellency." Thus we entered into a conversation which lasted till late at night. I then took my leave, and, upon returning to my inn, found grand preparations made there; for the duke had sent me the remains of his supper, with plenty of excellent wine, so, as I had passed my usual time of supper by two hours, I sat down to table with a most voracious appetite; and this was the first time I had been able to eat heartily during the course of four months.

Having set out in the morning I repaired to our Lady of Loretto, and after paying my devotions at that place I continued my journey to Rome, where I found my faithful friend Felice, to whom I resigned my shop, with all my furniture and ornaments, and opened another next door to Sugherrello, the perfumer, which was much more spacious and handsome than that which I had quitted. I took it for granted that the great French monarch would forget me, and therefore I engaged in several works for noblemen. Amongst others I began the cup and basin that I had promised to make for the Cardinal of Ferrara. I had a number of hands at work, and several things to be done both in gold and silver. I had made an agreement with my Perugian journeyman, who had kept an exact account of all the money that had been laid out for him in clothes and other articles (which, with his travelling expenses, amounted to about seventy crowns), that three crowns a month should be set aside to clear them off, as he earned above eight crowns a month in my service. In about two months the rogue left my shop, whilst I had a great deal of business upon my hands, declaring that I should have no further satisfaction. I was advised to have recourse to the law for redress, for I had formed a resolution to cut off one of his arms; and should certainly have done it, if my friends had not remonstrated with me, advising me to take care how I attempted any such thing, as it might be the cause not only of my losing the money entirely, but even of my being banished a second time from Rome; since it was impossible to tell how far my violence might extend. They added that it was in my power to get him arrested directly, by virtue of the bill in his own handwriting, which I had in my possession. This advice I determined to follow, but chose to behave as dispassionately in the affair as I could. I commenced a suit with him before the auditor of the chamber; and, having succeeded in it, I threw him into prison, in consequence of a decree of the court, after the cause had been several months de-

pending. My shop was at this time full of works of great importance; and, amongst others, were the ornaments in gold and jewels of the wife of Signor Girolamo Orsino, father to Signor Paolo, now son-in-law to our duke Cosmo. These pieces I had brought pretty near a conclusion, and others of still greater importance offered every day. I had eight hands in all, and worked day and night myself, excited by the desire of reputation and profit.

Whilst I was thus assiduous in going on with my business, I received a letter from the Cardinal of Ferrara, the purport of which was as follows:—

"My dear Friend Benvenuto,—A few days ago his Most Christian Majesty mentioned your name, and said he would be glad to have you in his service. I told him that you had made me a promise, that whenever I should send for you upon his majesty's account, you would come directly. His majesty replied, 'I desire he may be supplied with money, to enable him to perform the journey in a manner becoming so eminent an artist.' Upon saying this he instantly spoke to his admiral to order me to be paid a thousand gold crowns out of the treasury. Cardinal Gaddi happened to be present at this conversation; who, thereupon interposing, told his majesty that it was unnecessary for him to give such an order, as he had himself remitted to you a proper supply of money, and you were already upon the road. Now if this should not be the case, if you have neither received the money, nor are set out upon the journey, nor have heard anything of the matter, but it should be a mere finesse of the cardinal, to show that he patronises men of genius favoured by the king, or to make an ostentatious parade of having befriended you, as I am inclined to think it is nothing more, immediately upon receiving this letter, which contains the real truth, send me your answer. In consequence thereof I will at my next interview with the great monarch, contrive, in the presence of the crafty cardinal,

to make the conversation turn upon you, and I will tell him that you never received any of the money which Cardinal Gaddi pretends to have remitted to you, nor ever set out upon the journey, but are still at Rome; and I intend to make it evident that Cardinal Gaddi said this merely through vanity, and shall contrive matters so that his majesty shall again speak to his admiral to order the charges of your journey to be defrayed by the treasury; thus you may depend upon receiving the supply promised you by this munificent prince."

Let the whole world learn from hence, the great power and influence of malignant stars and adverse fortune over us poor mortals. I had never spoken twice in my days to this foolish little Cardinal Gaddi, and he did not play me this trick with any view to hurt or injure me, but merely through folly and senseless ostentation, that he might be thought to patronise men of genius, whom the king was desirous to have in his service, and to concern himself in their affairs in the same manner as the Cardinal of Ferrara. He was guilty of another folly in not apprising me of it afterwards; for rather than expose him to shame, I should, for the sake of my country, have thought of some excuse to palliate the absurdity of his conduct. I had no sooner received the letter from the Cardinal of Ferrara, but I wrote him back word that I had heard nothing at all from Cardinal Gaddi, and that even if he had made me any proposal I should never have quitted Italy without the knowledge of my friend the Cardinal of Ferrara; especially as I then had in Rome more business than I ever had before; but that at the first intimation of his most Christian Majesty's pleasure, signified to me by so great a personage as his reverence, I should instantly lay aside all other business, and set out for France.

When I had sent my letters, my treacherous Perugian journeyman thought of playing me a trick, in which he was but too successful, through the avarice of Pope Paul

Farnese, and still more through that of his bastard son, who then had the title of Duke of Castro. This journeyman gave one of the secretaries of Signor Pier Luigi to understand, that having worked in my shop several years, he had discovered that I was worth not less than eighty thousand ducats; that the greatest part of this wealth consisted in jewels which belonged to the Church; that they were part of the booty I had possessed myself of in the Castle of St. Angelo, at the time of the sack of Rome; and that there was no time to lose, but that I ought without delay to be taken up and examined.

I had one morning worked above three hours at the jewels of the above-mentioned married lady; and whilst my shop was opening, and my servants were sweeping it, I put on my cloak in order to take a turn or two. Bending my course through the Julian Street, I entered the quarter called Chiavica, where Crispino, captain of the city-guard, met me with his whole band of followers, and told me roughly I was the pope's prisoner. I answered him: "Crispino, you mistake your man."—"By no means," said Crispino; "you are the ingenious artist Benvenuto. I know you very well, and have orders to conduct you to the Castle of St. Angelo, where noblemen and men of genius like yourself are confined." As four of his soldiers were going to fall upon me, and deprive me forcibly of a dagger which I had by my side, and of the rings on my fingers, Crispino ordered them not to offer to touch me: it was sufficient, he said, for them to do their office, and prevent me from making my escape. Then coming up to me, he very politely demanded my arms. Whilst I was giving them up, I recollected that it was in that very place I had formerly killed Pompeo. From thence they conducted me to the castle, and locked me up in one of the upper apartments of the tower. This was the first time I ever knew the inside of a prison, and I was then in my thirty-seventh year.

CHAPTER XXII

Pier Luigi, the pope's illegitimate son, considering the great sum of money which I was charged with having in my possession, immediately applied to his father to make that money over to him. The pope readily granted his request, at the same time adding that he would assist him in the recovery of it. After I had been detained prisoner a whole week, they appointed commissioners to examine me, in order to bring the affair to an issue. I was thereupon sent for into a large handsome hall in the castle, where the examiners were assembled. These were, first, the Governor of Rome, Signor Benedetto Conversini, a native of Pistoia, who was afterwards Bishop of Jesi; the second, the Procurator of the Exchequer, whose name I cannot now recollect; the third, the Judge of Criminal Causes, named Signor Benedetto da Cagli. They began first to examine me in an amicable way, but afterwards broke out into the roughest and most menacing terms imaginable, occasioned, as I apprehend, by this speech of mine: "Gentlemen, you have for above half-an-hour been questioning me about an idle story, and such nonsense, that it may be justly said of you that you are trifling, and there is neither sense nor meaning in what you say; so I beg it of you, as a favour, that you would tell me your meaning, and let me hear something like sense and reason from you, and not idle stories and fabulous inventions." At these words the governor could no longer disguise his brutal nature, but said to me: "You speak with too much confidence, or rather with too much insolence; however, I will humble your pride, and make you as tame as a spaniel, by what I am going to tell you, which you will find to be neither an idle story nor nonsense, but such conclusive reasoning that you will be obliged to submit to it." So he began to deliver his sentiments as follows:—

"We know with certainty that you were in Rome at the time of the sacking of this unfortunate city, and in this very Castle of St. Angelo, where you performed the office of gunner. As you are by trade a goldsmith and jeweller, Pope Clement, having a particular knowledge of you, and being unable to meet with others of the business, employed you secretly to take out all the precious stones from his crowns, mitres, and rings; and putting entire confidence in you, desired you to sew them up in your clothes. You availed yourself of that confidence to appropriate to your own use to the value of 80,000 crowns unknown to his Holiness. This information we had from a journeyman of yours, to whom you discovered the whole affair, and boasted of the fraud. We now therefore enjoin and command you to find these jewels, or the value of them, after which we will discharge and set you at liberty."

I could not hear these words without bursting out into a loud laugh. When I had sufficiently indulged my mirth, I expressed myself thus: "I return my hearty thanks to God that this first time it has pleased His Divine Majesty that I should be made a prisoner, I have the happiness not to be confined for any criminal excess of passion, as generally happens to young men. If what you say were true, I am in no danger of suffering corporal punishment, as the laws at that time had lost all their force and authority; for I might excuse myself by affirming that, as a servant to his Holiness, I had kept that treasure as a deposit for the Apostolical See, with an intention to put it into the hands of some good pope, or of those that should claim it of me, as you do now, if the fact were as you represent it." The tyrannical governor would not suffer me to proceed any further, but interrupting me at these words, cried out in a fury: "Give what gloss you please to the affair, Benvenuto, it is enough for us that we have discovered the person who possessed himself of the treasure. Be as expeditious therefore as possible:

otherwise we shall take other methods with you, and not stop at words." As they were then preparing to depart, I said to them: "Gentlemen, you have not finished my examination: hear me out, and then do as you please." They seated themselves again, though they appeared to be much enraged, and unwilling to hear anything I could say for myself; nay, they seemed to be in a manner satisfied with their inquiry, and to think that they had discovered all they wanted to know. I therefore addressed them in the following terms: "You are to know, gentlemen, that I have lived in Rome nearly twenty years, and I was never before imprisoned either here or anywhere else." At these words the brute of a governor interrupted me and said: "Yet you have killed men enough in your time." I replied: "That is your bare assertion, unsupported by any acknowledgment of mine; but if a person were to endeavour to deprive you of life, no doubt but you, though a priest, would defend yourself in the best way you could; and if you were to kill him, you would be fully justified in the eye of the law: so let me conclude my defence, as you propose to lay it before his Holiness, and profess that you mean to pass a just judgment.

"I must repeat it to you, gentlemen, that I have been nearly twenty years an inhabitant of this great metropolis, and have been often employed in works of the greatest importance. I am sensible that this is the seat of Christ, and should, in case any temporal prince had made a wicked attempt against me, immediately have had recourse to this holy tribunal, and to God's Vicegerent, to prevail on him to espouse my cause. But alas! what power shall I have recourse to in my present distress? To what prince shall I fly, to defend me from so wicked an attempt? Should not you, before you ordered me to be arrested, inquire where I had deposited the 80,000 crowns in question? Should not you likewise have examined the list of those jewels, as they were carefully numbered

in the Apostolical Chamber in the last five hundred years? In case you had found anything wanting, you should have taken my books and myself, and confronted them with the jewels. I must inform you that the books, in which the people's jewels and those of the triple crown have been registered, are all extant; and you will find that Pope Clement was possessed of nothing but what was committed to writing with the utmost care and exactness. All I have to add is, that when the unfortunate Pope Clement was for making an accommodation with the Imperial freebooters, who had plundered Rome and insulted the Church, there came a person to negotiate the accommodation, whose name was Cæsar Iscatinaro, if my memory does not fail me, who having virtually concluded the treaty with that injured pontiff, the latter, in order to compliment the negotiator, let a ring drop from his finger, worth about four thousand crowns, and upon Iscatinaro's stooping to take it up, his Holiness desired him to wear it for his sake. I was present when all this happened, and if the diamond be missing, I have told you what became of it; but I am almost positive that you will find even this registered. You may therefore well be ashamed of having thus attacked a man of my character, who has been employed in so many affairs of importance for the Apostolical See. I must acquaint you, that had it not been for me, the morning that the Imperialists scaled the walls of Rome, they would have entered the castle without meeting with any opposition; I, though unrewarded for my services, exerted myself vigorously in managing the artillery, when all the soldiers had forsaken their posts. I likewise animated to the fight a companion of mine, named Raffaello da Montelupo, a sculptor, who had quitted his post like the rest, and hid himself in a corner quite frightened and dismayed; when I saw him entirely neglect the defence of the castle, I roused his courage, and he and I, unassisted, slaughtered such numbers of our foes that the soldiers

turned their force another way. I was the man who fired at Iscatinaro because I had seen him speak disrespectfully to Pope Clement, and behave insolently to his Holiness, like a Lutheran and an impious heretic as he was. Pope Clement, notwithstanding, caused the person who had performed that glorious action to be sought all over the castle in order to have him hanged. I was the man that shot the Prince of Orange in the head, under the ramparts of this castle. I have, moreover, made for the use of the Holy Church a vast number of ornaments of silver, gold, and precious stones; as likewise many medals, and the finest and most valuable coins. Is this, then, the priest-like return which is made to a man that has served you with so much diligence and zeal? Go now and repeat to the pope all I have said, assuring him that he has all his jewels, and that I got nothing else in the Church's service at the melancholy sack of this city but wounds and bruises; and reckoned upon nothing but an inconsiderable recompense which Pope Paul had promised me. Now I know what to think of his Holiness, and of you his ministers."

Whilst I uttered these words they stood astonished, and looking attentively at each other departed with gestures that testified wonder and surprise. They then went all three together to inform the pope of what I had said; the latter in some confusion gave orders that a diligent and accurate inquiry should be made into the account of all the jewels; and upon finding that none of them were missing, they left me in the castle, without taking any further notice of me. Signor Pier Luigi, however, went so far as to endeavour to destroy me, in order to conceal his own misconduct in the affair.

During this time of agitation and trouble, King Francis had heard a circumstantial account of the pope's keeping me in confinement so unjustly; and as a nobleman belonging to his court, named Monsieur de Monluc, had been sent ambassador to his Holiness, he wrote to him to apply

for my enlargement to his Holiness, as a person that belonged to his Majesty. The pope, though a man of sense and extraordinary abilities, behaved in this affair of mine like a person of as little virtue as understanding: the answer he returned the ambassador was "that the king his master need not give himself any concern about me, as I was a very turbulent, troublesome fellow; therefore he advised his Majesty to leave me where I was, because he kept me in prison for committing murder and other atrocious crimes." The King of France made answer "that justice was strictly observed in his dominions, and that as he rewarded and favoured good men, so he punished and discountenanced the bad;" adding, "that as his Holiness had suffered me to leave Italy, and had been no longer solicitous about my services, he, upon seeing me in his dominions, had gladly taken me under his patronage, and now claimed me as his subject." Though these were the greatest honours and favours that could possibly be conferred upon a man in my station of life, they were highly prejudicial and dangerous to my cause. The pope was so tormented with jealous fear lest I should go to France and discover his base treatment of me that he was constantly watching for an opportunity to get me despatched without hurting his own reputation.

The constable of the Castle of St. Angelo was a countryman of mine, a Florentine, named Signor Giorgio Ugolini. This worthy gentleman behaved to me with the greatest politeness, permitting me to walk freely about the castle on my parole of honour, and for no other reason but because he saw the severity and injustice of my treatment. Upon my offering to give him security for this indulgence, he declined taking it, because he heard everybody speak of me as a man of truth and integrity, though he knew the pope to be greatly exasperated against me. Thus I gave him my word and honour, and he even put me into a way of working a little at my business. As I took it for granted that the pope's anger would soon sub-

side, on account not only of my innocence, but of the King of France's intercession, I caused my shop to be kept open, and my young man Ascanio came often to the castle, bringing me some things to employ me; though I could do but very little, whilst so unjustly confined. However, I made a virtue of necessity, and bore my hard fortune as well as I could, having won the hearts of all the guards and soldiers belonging to the garrison. As the pope sometimes came to sup at the castle, whenever this happened, it was not guarded; but the doors were left open like those of any other palace. On such occasions the prisoners were put under close confinement; but this general rule was not observed with respect to me, for I was always at liberty to walk about the courts. Under these circumstances I was frequently advised by the soldiers to make my escape, and they declared that they would assist me in the recovery of my liberty, being sensible how unjustly I was treated. The answer I made them was "that I had given my word and honour to the constable of the castle, who was one of the most worthy men breathing, and had conferred great favours on me."

Amongst the soldiers who advised me to make my escape there was one, a man of great wit and courage, who reasoned with me thus: "My good friend Benvenuto, you should consider that a man who is a prisoner neither is nor can be bound to keep his word, nor to anything else: take my advice, and fly from this villain of a pope, and from his bastard son, who have sworn your destruction." But I, being determined rather to lose my life than break the promise I had made to the worthy constable, bore my hard lot as patiently as I could.

I had for the companion of my confinement a monk of the Pallavicini family, who was a celebrated preacher. He was confined for heresy, and had a great deal of wit and humour in conversation, but was one of the most profligate fellows in the world, contaminating himself with all sorts of vices: I admired his shining qualities, but his odious

vices I freely censured and held in abhorrence. This monk was constantly preaching to me that I was under no obligation to keep the word I had given to the constable of the castle, because I was a prisoner. I answered "that he spoke like a monk, but not like a man; for he that is a man and not a monk thinks himself obliged to keep his word upon all occasions, and in whatever circumstances he happens to be situated. Therefore, as I was a man and not a monk, I was resolved never to violate my plighted faith." The monk, perceiving that he could not corrupt me by all the subtle and sophistical arguments which he urged with so much force, had recourse to other means to seduce my virtue. For several days after he read to me the sermons of the monk Jeronimo Savonarola, and made so admirable a comment upon them that I was more delighted with it than even with the discourses themselves, though they had given me such high satisfaction; in fine, I had conceived so high an opinion of him that I would have done anything else at his recommendation, except breaking my word. The monk, seeing me astonished at his great talents, thought of another expedient: he asked me what method I should have had recourse to if they had made me a close prisoner, in order to effect my escape? Desirous of giving the ingenious monk some proof of my own acuteness, I told him that I could open any lock, even the most difficult, especially those of that prison, which I should make no more of forcing than of eating a bit of cheese. The monk, in order to make me discover my secret, began to disparage my ingenuity, observing that men who have acquired fame by their talents make many boasts, and that, if they were afterwards called upon to carry their boastings into execution, they would soon forfeit all the reputation they had acquired, adding that what I said seemed so far to pass all the bounds of probability that he apprehended were I to be put to the trial I should come off with but little honour.

Finding myself pushed hard by this artful monk, I told

him that I generally promised much less than I was able to perform, and that what I had said concerning the locks was a mere trifle; for I would soon convince him that I had said nothing but the truth; in a word, I inconsiderately discovered to him my whole secret. The monk, affecting to take little or no notice of what he saw, immediately learned the mystery. The worthy constable continued to allow me to walk up and down the castle, as I thought proper, and did not even order me to be locked up at night, like the rest of the prisoners; at the same time he suffered me to work as much as I pleased in gold, silver, and wax. I had been employed some weeks on a basin for the Cardinal of Ferrara, but being weary of my confinement, I grew tired also of large works, and only amused myself with now and then making little figures of wax. The monk stole a piece of this wax, and by means thereof put in practice all I had inconsiderately taught him with regard to counterfeiting the keys of the prison. He had taken for his associate and assistant a clerk named Luigi, who was a native of Padua: upon their attempting to counterfeit these keys, the smith discovered them. As the constable sometimes came to see me at my apartment, and saw me working in this wax, he immediately knew it and said: "That poor unfortunate Benvenuto has indeed been very hardly used: he should not, however, have concerned himself in such tricks, since I have done so much to oblige him; for the future I must confine him close prisoner, and show him no indulgence." So he ordered me to be closely confined, and with some circumstances of severity, which I suffered from the reproaches and opprobrious language of his servants, who had been my well-wishers, but now upbraided me with the obligations their master had laid me under, calling me an ungrateful and faithless man. As one of them was more bitter and abusive on the occasion than was consistent with decency, I, being conscious of my own innocence, answered boldly that I had never acted the part of a traitor or a faithless

man; that I would assert my innocence at the hazard of my life; and that if either he, or any other, ever again offered to give me any such abusive language, I should, without hesitation, give him the lie. Not being able to bear this affront, he ran to the constable's apartment, and brought me the wax, with the model of the key. As soon as I saw the wax I told him that both he and I were in the right; but begged to speak with the constable, that I might let him into the whole affair, which was of much greater importance than they imagined. The constable soon after sent for me, and I told him all that had passed; he thereupon put the monk into close confinement, and the latter informed against the clerk, who had nearly been hanged for it. The constable, however, hushed up the affair, which was already come to the ears of the pope, saved the clerk from the gallows, and restored me the same liberty as I had enjoyed before.

But, finding I had been treated with so much rigour in this affair, I began to think seriously, and said within myself, "If this man should again happen to take such a whim, and not choose to trust me any longer, I should not wish to be obliged to him, but to make a trial of my own skill, which I doubt not would have a very different success from that of the monk." I got my servants to bring me new thick sheets, and did not send back the dirty ones: upon their asking me for them, I answered that I had given them away to some of the poor soldiers, adding that if it should come to be discovered, they would be in danger of being sent to the galleys: thus my journeymen and servants, Felice in particular, took the utmost care to keep the thing secret. I pulled all the straw out of the tick of my bed, and burned it, for I had a chimney in the room where I lay. I then cut those sheets into a number of slips, each about one-third of a cubit in width, and when I thought I had made a sufficient quantity to reach from the top to the bottom of the lofty tower of the Castle of St. Angelo, I told my servants

that I had given away as much of my linen as I thought proper, and desired they would take care to bring me clean sheets, adding that I would constantly return them the dirty ones. This affair my workmen and servants quickly forgot.

The Cardinals Santiquattro and Cornaro caused my shop to be shut up, telling me in plain terms that his Holiness would not hear of my enlargement, and that the great favour shown me by the King of France had rather been of prejudice than any benefit to me. They added that the last words which Mons. de Monluc had spoken to the pope, by the direction of the king, were, that his Holiness ought to get the cause tried by the ordinary judges of the court; and that if I had any way transgressed I should suffer the punishment ordained by the law; but in case I were innocent, it was but just they should discharge me. These words had provoked the pope to such a degree, that he had almost formed a resolution to detain me prisoner the rest of my days. It must be acknowledged that the constable of the castle, on this occasion, espoused my cause to the utmost of his power.

CHAPTER XXIII

My enemies, when they saw that my shop was shut up, took every opportunity to insult and revile my servants and friends who visited me in my confinement. It happened that Ascanio, who came twice every day to see me, begged that I would get a little waistcoat made for him of a blue satin waistcoat of mine, which I had worn but once, when I walked in procession with it. I told him that it was no time nor place for such finery. The lad was so affronted at my refusing him a rag of a waistcoat that he declared he would go home to his father's at Tagliacozzo. I answered with indignation that I should be glad if I were

never to see his face more; and he swore in a most furious passion that he would never again appear in my presence. Whilst this altercation passed between us we were walking round the battlements of the castle, and as the constable himself happened to be taking a turn at the same time, we met him just as Ascanio said to me: "I am going to leave you, farewell for ever." To this I answered: "For ever let it be, and to make it more certain, I shall speak to the guards not to let you pass for the future;" so turning to the constable, I earnestly entreated him to command the sentinels never to suffer Ascanio to pass, telling him at the same time that the good-for-nothing fellow came only to increase my sufferings, and therefore I begged it, as a favour, that he might no longer have any admittance. The constable was sorry for what had happened, as he knew the lad to be possessed of an uncommon genius, and as his beauty was so great that those who had seen him but once could not help conceiving an affection for him. The young man left the place weeping, having about him a short sword, which he sometimes wore concealed under his clothes. As he was coming out of the castle, with his face bedewed with tears, he happened to meet two of my most inveterate enemies, Jeronimo the Perugian, and Michele, both goldsmiths. This Michele, who was a friend to that Perugian rogue, and an enemy to Ascanio, said to the latter: "What can this mean? Ascanio weeping! Is your father dead? I mean your father at the castle?"—"He is living," answered Ascanio, "but you are a dead man." Thereupon raising his arm, he, with his sword, gave him two wounds, both on the head: with the first he brought him to the ground, and with the second he cut off the fingers of his right hand, besides wounding him on the head; so that he lay motionless, like one deprived of life.

The pope, having received information of what had happened, said, with great indignation: "Since it is the king's pleasure that Benvenuto be brought to a trial, go,

bid him prepare for his defence in three days' time." The proper officers came to me from his Holiness, and delivered themselves according to his directions. The worthy constable upon this repaired to the pope, and made him sensible that I had nothing at all to do with the affair, and that I had turned off the youth who had committed that rash action; in short, he defended my cause so well that he prevented me from falling a victim to the pontiff's resentment. Ascanio fled to Tagliacozzo, to his father's house, and wrote to me from thence to beg my pardon a thousand times, and acknowledge his fault in having added to my sufferings by his misbehaviour. He concluded by assuring me that if God should ever be so merciful as to deliver me from my confinement, he would never again forsake me. In my answer I desired he would endeavour to improve, telling him that if the Almighty restored my liberty, I should certainly send for him.

The constable of the castle had annually a certain disorder, which totally deprived him of his senses, and when the fit came upon him, he was talkative to excess. Every year he had some different whim: one time he fancied himself metamorphosed into a pitcher of oil; another time he thought himself a frog, and began to leap as such; another time again he imagined he was dead, and it was found necessary to humour his conceit by making a show of burying him: thus had he every year some new frenzy. This year he fancied himself a bat, and when he went to take a walk, he sometimes made just such a noise as bats do; he likewise used gestures with his hands and his body, as if he were going to fly. His physicians, and his old servants, who knew his disorder, procured him all the pleasures and amusements they could think of; and as they found he delighted greatly in my conversation, they frequently came to me, to conduct me to his apartment, where the poor man often detained me three or four hours chatting with him. He sometimes kept me at his table to dine or sup, and always made me sit opposite to him; on

which occasion he never ceased to talk himself, or to encourage me to join in conversation. At these interviews I generally took care to eat heartily, but the poor constable neither ate nor slept, insomuch that I was tired and jaded by constant attendance. Upon examining his countenance, I could perceive that his eyes looked quite shocking, and that he began to squint.

He asked me whether I had ever had a fancy to fly: I answered "that I had always been very ready to attempt such things as men found most difficult; and that with regard to flying, as God had given me a body admirably well calculated for running, I had even resolution enough to attempt to fly." He then proposed to me to explain how I could contrive it. I replied that "when I attentively considered the several creatures that fly, and thought of effecting by art what they do by the force of nature, I did not find one so fit to imitate as the bat." As soon as the poor man heard mention made of a bat, his frenzy for the year turning upon that animal, he cried out aloud: "It is very true; a bat is the thing." He then addressed himself to me and said: "Benvenuto, if you had the opportunity, would you have the heart to make an attempt to fly?" I answered that if he would give me leave, I had courage enough to attempt to fly as far as Prati by means of a pair of wings waxed over. He said thereupon: "I should like to see you fly; but as the pope has enjoined me to watch over you with the utmost care, and I know that you have the cunning of the devil, and would avail yourself of the opportunity to make your escape, I am resolved to keep you locked up with a hundred keys that you may not slip out of my hands." I then began to solicit him with new entreaties, putting him in mind that I had had it in my power to make my escape, but through regard to the promise I had made him, would never avail myself of the opportunity. I therefore besought him for the love of God, and as he had conferred so many obligations on me, that he would not

make my condition worse than it was. Whilst I uttered these words, he gave instant orders that I should be secured and confined a closer prisoner than ever. When I saw that it was to no purpose to entreat him any further, I said before all present: "Confine me as close as you please, I will contrive to make my escape notwithstanding." So they carried me off, and locked me up with the utmost care.

I then began to deliberate upon the method I should pursue to make my escape: as soon as I saw myself locked in, I set about examining the place in which I was confined, and thinking I had discovered a sure way to get out, I revolved in my mind in what manner I could descend the height of the great tower. Having first of all formed a conjecture of the length of line sufficient for me to descend by, I took a new pair of sheets which I had cut into slips, and sewed fast together. The next thing I wanted was a pair of pincers, which I took from a Savoyard, who was upon guard at the castle. This man had care of the casks and cisterns belonging to the castle, and likewise worked as a carpenter; and as he had several pairs of pincers, and one amongst others which was thick and large, thinking it would suit my purpose, I took it and hid it in the tick of my bed. The time being come that I intended to make use of it, I began, with the pincers, to pull at the nails which fastened the plates of iron fixed upon the door, and as the door was double, the clenching of those nails could not be perceived. I exerted my utmost efforts to draw out one of them, and at last with great difficulty succeeded. As soon as I had drawn the nail, I was again obliged to torture my invention, in order to devise some expedient to prevent its being perceived. I immediately thought of mixing a little of the filings of rusty iron with wax, and this mixture was exactly the colour of the heads of the nails which I had drawn; I with it counterfeited their resemblance on the iron plates, and as many as I drew

I imitated in wax. I left each of the plates fastened both at top and bottom, and refixed them with some of the nails that I had drawn; but the nails were cut, and I drove them in slightly, so that they just served to hold the plates. I found it a very difficult matter to effect all this, because the constable dreamed every night that I had made my escape, and therefore used to send frequently to have the prison searched: the person employed on this occasion had the appearance and behaviour of one of the city-guards. The name of this fellow was Bozza, and he constantly brought with him another, named Giovanni Pedignone: the latter was a soldier, the former a servant. This Giovanni never came to the room where I was confined without giving me abusive language. The other was from Prato, where he had lived with an apothecary: he every evening carefully examined the plates of iron above mentioned, as well as the whole prison. I constantly said to him: "Examine me well, for I am positively determined to make my escape." These words occasioned a bitter enmity between him and me.

With the utmost care I deposited all my tools, that is to say, my pincers, and a dagger of a tolerable length, with other things belonging to me, in the tick of my bed, and as soon as it was daylight swept the room myself, for I naturally delighted in cleanliness, but on this occasion I took care to be particularly neat. As soon as I had swept the room, I made my bed with equal care, and adorned it with flowers, which were every morning brought me by a Savoyard. This man, as I have observed before, took care of the cisterns and the casks belonging to the castle, and sometimes amused himself with working in wood: it was from him I stole the pincers, with which I pulled out the nails that fastened the iron plates on the door. To return to my bed: whenever Bozza and Pedignone came, I generally bade them keep at a distance from it, that they might not dirty and spoil it; sometimes I would say to them

(for they would now and then merely for diversion tumble my bed): "You dirty wretches, I will draw one of your swords, and give you such a chastisement as will astonish you. Do you think yourselves worthy to touch the bed of a man like me? Upon such an occasion I should not spare my own life, but am sure that I should be able to take away yours; so leave me to my own troubles and sorrows, and do not make my lot more bitter than it is. If you act otherwise, I will show you what a desperate man is capable of." The men repeated what I said to the constable, who expressly commanded them never to go near my bed, ordering them at the same time when they came to me, to have no swords, and to be particularly careful with respect to every other circumstance. Having thus secured my bed from their searches, I thought I had gained the main point, and was on that account highly rejoiced.

One holiday evening the constable being very much disordered, and his madness being at the highest pitch, he scarce said anything else but that he was become a bat, and desired his people, that if Benvenuto happened to make his escape, they should take no notice of it, for he must soon catch me, as he should, doubtless, be much better able to fly by night than I, adding, "Benvenuto is only a counterfeit bat; but I am a bat in good earnest. Let me alone to manage him, I shall be able to catch him, I warrant you." His frenzy continuing thus in its utmost violence for several nights, he tired the patience of all his servants; and I by various means came to the knowledge of all that passed, though I was indebted for my chief information to the Savoyard, who was very much attached to me.

As I had formed a resolution to attempt my escape that night, let what would happen, I began with praying fervently to Almighty God, that it would please His Divine Majesty to befriend and assist me in that hazardous enterprise: I then went to work, and was employed the whole

night in preparing whatever I had occasion for. Two hours before daybreak I took the iron plates from the door with great trouble and difficulty, for the bolt and the wood that received it made a great resistance, so that I could not open them, but was obliged to cut the wood. I however at last forced the door, and having taken with me the above-mentioned slips of linen, which I had rolled up in bundles with the utmost care, I went out and got upon the right side of the tower, and having removed, from within, two tiles of the roof, I leaped upon them with the utmost ease. I was in a white doublet, and had on a pair of white half hose, over which I wore a pair of little light boots, that reached half way up my legs, and in one of these I put my dagger. I then took the end of one of my bundles of long slips, which I had made out of the sheets of my bed, and fastened it to one of the tiles of the roof that happened to jut out four inches; and the long string of slips was fastened to the tiles in the manner of a stirrup. When I had fixed it firmly, I addressed myself to the Deity in these terms: "Almighty God, favour my cause, for Thou knowest it is a just one, and I am not on my part wanting in my utmost efforts to make it succeed." Then letting myself down gently, and the whole weight of my body being sustained by my arm, I at last reached the ground.

It was not a moonlight night, but the stars shone with resplendent lustre. When I had touched the ground, I first contemplated the great height which I had descended with so much courage; and then walked away in high joy, thinking I had recovered my liberty. But I soon found myself mistaken; for the constable had caused two pretty high walls to be erected on that side, which made an enclosure for a stable and a poultry-yard: this place was fastened with great bolts on the outside. When I saw myself immured in this enclosure, I felt the greatest anxiety imaginable. Whilst I was walking backwards and forwards, I stumbled on a long pole covered with

straw; this I with much difficulty fixed against the wall, and by the strength of my arms climbed to the top of it; but as the wall was sharp, I could not get a sufficient hold to enable me to descend by the pole to the other side. I therefore resolved to have recourse to my other string of slips, for I had left one tied to the great tower; so I took the string, and having fastened it properly, I descended down the steep wall. This put me to a great deal of pain and trouble, and likewise tore the skin off the palms of my hands, insomuch that they were bloody all over; for which reason I rested myself a little, and was reduced even to wash them in my own water. When I thought I had sufficiently recruited my strength, I came to the last wall, which looked towards the meadows, and, having prepared my string of long slips, which I wanted to get about one of the niched battlements, in order to descend this as I had done the other higher wall, a sentinel perceived what I was about. Finding my design obstructed, and myself in danger of my life, I resolved to cope with the soldier, who seeing me advance towards him resolutely with my drawn dagger in my hand, thought it most advisable to keep out of my way. After I had gone a little way from my string, I quickly returned to it; and though I was seen by another of the soldiers upon guard, the man did not care to take any notice of me. I then fastened my string to the niched battlement, and began to let myself down. Whether it was owing to my being near the ground, and preparing to give a leap, or whether my hands were quite tired, I do not know, but being unable to hold out any longer, I fell, and in falling struck my head and became quite insensible.

I continued in that state about an hour and a half, as nearly as I can guess. The day beginning to break, the cool breeze that precedes the rising of the sun brought me to myself; but I had not yet thoroughly recovered my senses, for I had conceived a strange notion that I had been beheaded, and was then in purgatory. I however,

by degrees, recovered my strength and powers; and perceiving that I had got out of the castle, I soon recollected all that had befallen me. As I perceived that my senses had been affected, before I took notice that my leg was broken, I clapped my hands to my head, and found them all bloody. I afterwards searched my body all over, and thought I had received no hurt of any consequence; but upon attempting to rise from the ground, I found that my right leg was broken three inches above the heel, which threw me into a terrible consternation. I thereupon pulled my dagger with its scabbard out of my boot: this scabbard was cased with a large piece of metal at the bottom, which occasioned the hurt to my leg; as the bone could not bend any way, it broke in that place. I therefore threw away the scabbard, and cutting the part of my string of slips that I still had left, I bandaged my leg as well as I could. I then crept on my hands and knees towards the gate, with my dagger in my hand, and, upon coming up to it, found it shut; but observing a stone under the gate, and thinking that it did not stick very fast, I prepared to push it away; clapping my hands to it, I found that I could move it with ease, so I soon pulled it out, and effected my egress. It was about five hundred paces from the place where I had had my fall to the gate at which I entered the city.

As soon as I got in, some mastiff dogs came up, and bit me severely: finding that they persisted to worry me I took my dagger and gave one of them so severe a stab, that he set up a loud howling; whereupon all the dogs in the neighbourhood, as is the nature of those animals, ran up to him; and I made all the haste I could to crawl towards the church of St. Maria Transpontina. When I arrived at the entrance of the street that leads towards the Castle of St. Angelo, I took my way from thence towards St. Peter's gate; but, as it was then broad daylight, I reflected that I was in great danger, and happening to meet with a water-carrier, who had loaded his ass, and filled his

vessels with water, I called to him and begged he would put me upon the beast's back, and carry me to the landing-place of the steps of St. Peter's church. I told him, that I was an unfortunate youth, who had been concerned in a love-intrigue, and had made an attempt to get out at a window, from which I had fallen, and broken my leg; but as the house I came out of belonged to a person of the first rank, I should be in danger of being cut to pieces if discovered. I therefore earnestly entreated him to take me up, and offered to give him a gold crown; so saying, I clapped my hand to my purse, which was very well lined. The honest waterman instantly took me upon his back, and carried me to the steps before St. Peter's church, where I desired him to leave me and to run back to his ass.

I immediately set out, crawling in the same manner I had done before, in order to reach the house of the duchess, consort to Duke Ottavio, natural daughter to the emperor, and who had been formerly married to Alessandro, the late duke of Florence. I knew that there were several of my friends with that princess, who had attended her from Florence; as likewise that I had the happiness of being in her excellency's good graces. This last circumstance had been partly owing to the constable of the castle, who, having a desire to befriend me, told the pope that when the duchess made her entry into Rome, I prevented a damage of above a thousand crowns, that they were likely to suffer by a heavy rain; upon which occasion, when he was almost in despair, I had revived his drooping courage, by pointing several pieces of artillery towards that tract of the heavens where the thickest clouds had gathered; so that when the shower began to fall, I fired my pieces, whereupon the clouds dispersed, and the sun again shone out in all its brightness. Therefore it was entirely owing to me that the above day of rejoicing had been happily concluded. This coming to the ears of the duchess, her excellency said, that Benvenuto was one of those men of genius, who loved the memory of her husband Duke Alessandro,

and she should always remember such, whenever an opportunity offered of doing them services. She had likewise spoken of me to Duke Ottavio her husband. I was, therefore, going directly to the place where her excellency resided, which was in Borgo Vecchio, at a magnificent palace. There I should have been perfectly secure from any danger of falling into the pope's hands; but as the exploit I had already performed was too extraordinary for a human creature, and lest I should be puffed up with vain-glory, God was pleased to put me to a still severer trial than that which I had already gone through.

What gave occasion to this was, that whilst I was crawling along upon all fours, one of the servants of Cardinal Cornaro knew me, and running immediately to his master's apartment, awakened him out of his sleep, saying to him, "My most reverend Lord, here is your jeweller, Benvenuto, who has made his escape out of the castle, and is crawling along upon all fours, quite besmeared with blood: by what I can judge from appearances, he seems to have broken one of his legs, and we cannot guess whither he is bending his course." The cardinal, the moment he heard this, said to his servants, "Run, and bring him hither to my apartment upon your backs." When I came into his presence, the good cardinal bade me fear nothing, and immediately sent for some of the most eminent surgeons of Rome to take care of me; amongst these was Signor Jacopo of Perugia, an excellent practitioner. This last set the bone, then bandaged my leg, and bled me. As my veins were swelled more than usual, and he wanted to make a pretty wide incision, the blood gushed from me with such violence, and in so great a quantity, that it spirted into his face, and covered him in such a manner, that he found it a very difficult matter to continue his operation. He looked upon this as very ominous, and was with difficulty prevailed upon to attend me afterwards; nay, he was several times for leaving me, recollecting that he had run

a great hazard by having anything to do with me. The cardinal then caused me to be put into a private apartment, and went directly to the Vatican, in order to intercede in my behalf with the pope.

CHAPTER XXIV

MEANWHILE the report of my escape made a great noise all over Rome, for the long string of sheeting fastened to the top of the lofty tower of the castle had excited attention, and the inhabitants ran in crowds, to behold the strange sight. By this time the frenzy of the constable had risen to its highest pitch: he wanted, in spite of all his servants, to fly from the same tower himself, declaring that there was but one way to re-take me, and that was for him to fly after me. Signor Roberto Pucci, father to Signor Pandolfo, having heard the rumour, went in person to see whether it was as fame had reported. He then repaired to the Vatican, where he happened to meet with Cardinal Cornaro, who told him all that had passed; that my wounds were dressed, and that I was at his apartments. These two worthy men threw themselves upon their knees before the pope, who, before they could begin their supplication, cried out, "I know what you want." Signor Roberto Pucci answered, "Most holy father, we come to intercede for that poor man, who, on account of his extraordinary abilities, deserves some compassion. He has displayed such courage, and exerted such extraordinary efforts of ingenuity, as seem to surpass human capacity. We know not for what offences your Holiness has so long confined him; if his crimes, however, are enormous, convinced as we are of your piety and wisdom, we leave him to your decision; but if they are of a pardonable nature, we beg you will forgive him at our intercession." The pope, in some confusion, replied

that he had detained me in prison by the advice of some persons at court, because I had been too presumptuous; that, in consideration of my extraordinary talents, he had intended to keep me near his person, and to confer such favours upon me that I should have no occasion to return to France. "I am concerned to hear of his sufferings; however," added he, "bid him take care of his health, and when he is thoroughly recovered, it shall be my study to make him some amends for his past troubles."

The two great personages then came to me from the pope with this good news. In the meantime I was visited by the nobility of Rome, by young and old, and persons of all ranks. The constable of the castle, quite out of his senses, caused himself to be carried into his Holiness's presence; and, when he was come, began to make a terrible outcry, declaring that if the pope did not send me back to prison, it would be doing him great injustice. He added, that I had made my escape in violation of my word; for that I had promised him upon my honour that I would not fly away, and had flown away notwithstanding. The pope answered him, laughing, "Go, go, I will restore your prisoner by some means." The constable said to the pope, "Send the governor then to examine him concerning the accomplices of his escape. If any of my people had a hand in it, I will have them hanged from the same battlement from which Benvenuto flew."

As soon as the constable was gone, the pope sent for the governor of Rome, and said to him, laughing, "This Benvenuto is a brave fellow: the exploit he has performed is very extraordinary; and yet, when I was a young man, I descended from the very same place." In this the pope spoke the truth, for he had himself been a prisoner in the Castle of St. Angelo, for forging a papal brief, when he was abbreviator in the pontificate of Pope Alexander, who kept him a long time in confinement; and afterwards, as his offence was of a very heinous nature, determined to have him beheaded. But as he chose to defer the exe-

cution till after Corpus Christi day, Farnese, having discovered the design, got Pietro Chiavelluzzi to come to him with some horsemen, and bribed several of the guards; so that whilst the pope was walking in procession on that day, Farnese was put into a basket, and with a cord let down to the ground. The precincts of the castle wall had not then been erected, but the tower only, so that he had not so many difficulties to encounter in making his escape as I; besides, he was a prisoner for a real crime, and I upon an unjust accusation. He meant to boast to the governor only of his having been a brave and gallant fellow in his youth; but instead of that, he inadvertently discovered his own villainy. He then said to the governor, "Go to Benvenuto, and desire him to let you know who assisted him in making his escape; let him be who he will, Benvenuto may depend upon being pardoned himself, and of that you may freely assure him."

The governor, who had two days before been made Bishop of Jesi, came to me in consequence of the order from the pope, and addressed me in these terms: "My friend Benvenuto, though my office is of a nature that terrifies men, I come to encourage you and dispel your fears, and that by authority of his Holiness, who has told me that he made his escape himself out of the Castle of St. Angelo; but that he had been assisted by several associates, otherwise he could not have effected his purpose. I swear to you by the sacrament that I have just now received (and it is but two days since I was consecrated bishop), that the pope has liberated and pardoned you, and that he is sorry for your sufferings. Therefore, endeavour to recover your health, and you will find that all has happened to you for the best, and that the confinement which you have suffered, though innocently, will be the making of you for ever; for you will thereby emerge from your poverty, and not be obliged to return to France, or to endure any distresses in foreign countries. So, freely tell me how the whole affair passed, and who

assisted you in your escape; then be comforted, indulge yourself in repose, and endeavour to recover your health." I thereupon began my story from the beginning, delivered a circumstantial account of the whole affair exactly as it happened, and gave him all the tokens of the truth of my narrative that I could possibly think of, not forgetting even the poor waterman that had taken me upon his back. The governor, having heard my story to the end, said, "You have achieved too many great things for one person; at least, you are the only man deserving of the glory of such an exploit." So, taking me by the hand, he said to me, "Be of good cheer; by this hand you are free, and shall be a happy man."

He thereupon withdrew, and left me at liberty to see a considerable number of nobility and gentry, who had been waiting, for they were every day coming to see me as a man that had performed miracles. Some of them made me promises, whilst others made me presents.

In the meantime, the governor of Rome repaired to the pope, and related to him all that he had heard from me. Signor Pier Luigi, the pope's son, happened to be then present, and both he and all who heard the story expressed the utmost astonishment. The pope said, "This is certainly one of the most extraordinary events that ever happened." Signor Pier Luigi then interposing, said, "Most holy father, if you liberate this man, he will do something else still more daring, for he is one of the boldest and most audacious of mortals. I must tell you of another exploit of his, which you have not heard of. This favourite of yours, Benvenuto, happening before his confinement to have some words with a gentleman belonging to Cardinal Santa Fiora, occasioned by some expression of that gentleman's, Benvenuto answered with the utmost audacity, and seemed bent on quarrelling. The gentleman having informed Cardinal Santa Fiora of all that had passed, the latter said that if he once took Benvenuto in hand, he would soon find means to tame him. After

Benvenuto heard of this, he always kept in readiness a fowling-piece, with which he can hit a farthing. The cardinal happening one day to look out at a window (the shop of Benvenuto being under his palace), the latter took his fowling-piece, levelled it at the cardinal, and was about to fire, when the latter, being apprised of his intention, instantly quitted the place. Upon this, Benvenuto, in order to conceal his purpose, took aim at a pigeon, which was hatching its eggs in a hole upon the roof of the palace, and shot it through the head; a feat almost incredible. Your Holiness may now act as you think proper with respect to the man. I thought it a duty incumbent on me to tell you what I knew. He may possibly one day, in a persuasion that he was imprisoned unjustly, take it into his head to have a shot at your Holiness. He is a man of too fierce and audacious a spirit. When he killed Pompeo, he gave him two stabs with a dagger in the throat, though he was surrounded by ten of his friends; and then made his escape, to the disgrace of those ten, though they were men of worth and reputation." Whilst he was saying this, the gentleman belonging to the Cardinal Santa Fiora, with whom I had had the dispute, happened to be present, and confirmed to the pope all that his son had related. The pontiff swelled with indignation, but said nothing.

I should be sorry to omit giving a true and impartial account of the affair thus alluded to. This gentleman belonging to Cardinal Santa Fiora one day came to me, and put into my hands a little gold ring, which was sullied all over with quicksilver, saying, "Clean me that ring, and make haste about it." As I had then upon my hands several works of the utmost importance, both in gold and jewels, and was irritated at being commanded in that peremptory manner by one whom I had never seen or spoken to before, I told him I had no time to do it, and advised him to go to somebody else. Upon this, without further ceremony, he called me an ass. I told

him that he was mistaken, for I was in every respect a better man than himself, and that if he provoked me too far, he should find I could kick worse than any ass. He immediately told the cardinal the affair in his own way, describing my behaviour as most outrageous. Two days after, I shot behind the palace at a wild pigeon, that was hatching its eggs in a hole at a great height. I had several times before seen one Giovanni Francesco della Tacca, a Milanese goldsmith, shoot at the same pigeon without killing it. The day that I shot at it, the pigeon happened just to show its head, being suspicious and in fear from having so often been fired at before. As Giovanni Francesco and I were rival marksmen, some gentlemen and friends of mine, who were in my shop, showed me the pigeon, and said, "Yonder is the bird which Giovanni Francesco has so often shot at, and always missed; do but observe, the poor creature is so timorous and suspicious, that it scarce ventures to show its head." Looking up at it, I said, "That head is mark enough for me to level at and kill the pigeon; if I had but just time to take aim cleverly, I should be sure of bringing it down." The gentlemen then said, "that the very inventor of fowling-pieces would not hit such a mark." I answered, "Let us get a pitcher of our good host Palombo's Greek wine, and just wait till I charge my *broccardo* (so I called my fowling-piece), and I will engage to hit that little bit of a head which peeps out of yonder hole." I that instant took aim, and performed my promise, without thinking of the cardinal or anybody else; on the contrary, I took it for granted that the cardinal was my patron and friend. It appears from hence, what a variety of means fortune has recourse to, when she is bent on a man's destruction.

The pope, who was provoked and angry at what he had heard from his son, revolved it seriously in his mind. Two days after, Cardinal Cornaro went to ask his Holiness for a bishopric for one of his gentlemen, named Signor

Andrea Centano. It is true the pope had promised him the first bishopric that should become vacant: he did not therefore offer to retract, but, acknowledging that he had made such a promise, told the cardinal he would let him have the bishopric on condition of his doing him one favour, which was, that he would again deliver Benvenuto into his hands. The cardinal cried out, "What will the world say of it, since your Holiness has pardoned him? And as you have consigned him over to my care, what will the people of Rome say of your Holiness and of me?" The pope replied, "I must insist upon having Benvenuto, if you have a mind to the bishopric; and let people talk as they will." The good cardinal desired that his Holiness would give him the bishopric, and rely upon his doing afterwards as his Holiness should think proper. The pope, appearing to be almost ashamed of the violation of his faith, said, "I will send to you for Benvenuto, and, for my own satisfaction, put him into certain apartments of the privy gardens, where he may recover at leisure, take proper care of his health, and his friends shall be at liberty to visit him. I will myself bear all his expenses till he is thoroughly recovered from this little affair."

The cardinal came home, and sent me word by the person in whose behalf he had applied for the bishopric, that the pope would fain have me again in his hands; and that he intended to keep me in one of the ground-floor apartments belonging to the privy garden, where I might receive the visits of the nobility and gentry, and of all my friends, in the same manner I had done at his house. I then requested Signor Andrea to desire the cardinal not to surrender me to the pope, but to leave the matter to me; adding, that I intended to get myself wrapped up in a mattress, and carried to a place of safety at a distance from Rome; for in delivering me up to the pope he would consign me to certain destruction. The cardinal, when he heard this, was upon the point of com-

plying with my desire; but Signor Andrea, who was to have the bishopric, discovered the whole affair.

In the meantime the pope suddenly sent for me, and caused me to be put into one of the ground-floor apartments belonging to his privy garden, as he had said he would. The cardinal sent me word not to eat anything dressed in the pope's kitchen, for he would supply me from his own table: at the same time he assured me that he could not possibly avoid acting as he had done, begged I would make myself entirely easy, and promised that he would contrive to procure me my liberty by some means or other.

Whilst I was in this situation, I was every day visited by many persons of distinction, and received from them several valuable presents and offers of service. Victuals were sent me by the pope, but these I would never touch, instead of which I ate of those sent me by the Cardinal Cornaro; this rule I constantly observed. Amongst my other friends, there was a young Greek, about five-and-twenty years of age: he was an active, gay youth, and the best swordsman at that time in Rome. He was somewhat deficient in point of courage, but faithful, honest, and very credulous. He had heard what the pope had said at first in my favour, about repaying me for my past sufferings, but perhaps did not know that he had afterwards spoken in a very different style. I therefore resolved to trust this young Greek, and spoke to him in the following manner: "My dear friend, these people are resolved to take away my life, so that now is the time to assist me. What! do they think I cannot perceive that whilst they show me such external acts of civility, it is all with an intention to betray me?" The good youth answered: "My friend Benvenuto, a report prevails all over Rome, that the pope has given you a place worth five hundred crowns a year: I therefore entreat you not to let your groundless suspicions deprive you of so great an emolument." But all this made no impression on me: still I

most earnestly besought him to take me out of that place, being thoroughly convinced that, though the pope had it in his power to do me great favours, he secretly intended to injure me as much as he could, consistently with his reputation. I therefore urged him to be as expeditious as possible in rescuing me from such a formidable enemy; adding, that if he would release me from my confinement in the manner I should point out, I should always consider myself as indebted to him for the preservation of my life; and would, when occasion offered, gladly venture it in his service. The poor young fellow replied, with tears in his eyes, "My dear friend, you are bent on your own destruction, but I cannot refuse complying with your desire; so tell me how you would have me proceed, and I will do whatever you require, though much against my inclination." Thus we at last agreed, and I told him in what method to proceed, and what measures to adopt; so that we should have found it a very easy matter to carry our design into execution. When I thought he was upon the point of performing all that he had promised, he came to tell me, that for my own sake he must disobey me; adding, that he had been informed by those who were near the pope's person of the real state of my case. Having no other means of effecting my purpose, I now remained forlorn and in despair. This happened on Corpus Christi Day, in the year 1539.

Our dispute being over, and night approaching, a great quantity of provisions was brought me from the pope's kitchen, and at the same time I received an ample supply from Cardinal Cornaro. Several of my friends happening to be with me, I invited them to stay to supper: they consented, and I spent the evening cheerfully, keeping my leg wrapped up in the bed-clothes. About an hour after sunset, they took their leave of me; and two of my servants having put me to bed, retired to the antechamber.

I had a shock dog, as black as a mulberry, who had been of great use to me when I went a-fowling, and now

would never quit me a moment: as he happened at night to be under my bed, I called to the servants to take him away, because he kept howling most hideously. When the servants came, the dog flew at them like a tiger: they were frightened out of their wits at this, and under terrible apprehensions that the creature was mad, from its incessant howling. This lasted till one in the morning.

As soon as the clock struck the hour, the captain of the city-guards entered my apartment with a considerable number of his followers: the dog then came from under the bed, flew at them with great fury, tore their cloaks and their hose, and so terrified them, that they thought he was mad. But the captain, being a man of experience, said, "Such is the nature of faithful dogs, that they, by a sort of instinct, foreknow and proclaim any misfortune that is to befall their masters. Two of you take sticks, and defend yourselves from the dog: let the rest seize Benvenuto, bind him fast to that seat, and carry him you know where." As I have said, it was the last day of Corpus Christi, at one in the morning. The guards obeyed their order: I was covered and wrapped up, while four of them walked on before the rest, to disperse the few people who might happen still to be walking in the streets.

In this manner they conveyed me to a prison called the Tower of Nona, and putting me into that part of it assigned to condemned criminals, laid me upon a piece of a mat, and left one of the guards to watch me. This man all the night lamented my hard fate, saying, "Alas! poor Benvenuto, what have you done to offend these people?" Hence I quickly conjectured what was to be my lot, as well from the circumstance of my being confined in such a place, as because my guard had apprised me of it. I continued part of that night in the utmost anxiety of mind, vainly endeavouring to guess for what cause it had pleased God so to afflict me; and not being able to discover it, I beat my breast with my despair. The guard

did the best he could to comfort me: but I begged of him, for the love of God, to leave me to myself, and say no more; as I should sooner and more easily compose myself by my own endeavours: he promised he would do as I desired.

I then turned my whole heart to God, and devoutly prayed that it would please Him to afford me His divine aid; though I could not help lamenting my hard fate, considering my escape justifiable according to all laws, both divine and human; and though I had sometimes been guilty of manslaughter, yet as God's Vicar upon earth had recalled me from my own country, and confirmed my pardon by his authority, and all that I had done was in defence of my body which heaven had given me, I did not see how I could in any sense be thought to deserve death. My case, indeed, appeared to be much the same with that of those unfortunate persons, who, whilst they are walking the streets, are killed by the falling of a stone upon their heads; in the same manner as is often owing to the influence of the stars, not that they conspire to do us either good or mischief, but it proceeds from their conjunctions, to which we are all said to be subject. Although I know I have free-will, and that if my faith were as strong and lively as it should be, angels would be sent from heaven to deliver me out of this prison, and to relieve me from all the distresses I groan under; yet as I am unworthy of being so highly favoured by the divine power, the stars are permitted to shed all their baleful influence on my devoted head. Having continued in this agitation of mind some time, I at last composed myself and fell asleep.

As soon as it was morning my guard awaked me, and said, "O unfortunate, though virtuous man! this is no time for you to sleep, for here comes the messenger of dismal tidings." To this I answered, "The sooner I am delivered from the prison of this world the better, especially as I am sure of salvation, being unjustly put to

death. The glorified and divine Jesus makes me a companion to His disciples and friends, who suffered death without cause; and I return thanks to the Almighty for the favour. Why does not the person come who is to pronounce my sentence?" The guard replied, "He is grieved on your account, and even now weeps your approaching fate." I then called to him by his name, which was Benedetto da Cagli: "Draw near, my good Benedetto, now that I am ready and prepared for my fate: it is much more for my glory that I should die innocent, than if I were to suffer for my crimes. Come hither, and let me have a priest to talk with for a while before my departure, though I have indeed but little occasion for such assistance, as I have already made my confession to the Almighty. I desire it merely in compliance with the will of our Holy Mother, the Church; for though she has cruelly wronged me, I freely forgive her. Therefore approach me, my dear Benedetto, and despatch me whilst I am resigned and willing to receive my sentence." When I had uttered these words, honest Benedetto bade the guard lock the door, which, without his authority, could not be done.

He went directly to Pier Luigi's lady, who was in company with the duchess above mentioned, and as soon as he was come into their presence, he addressed her thus: "I implore you, most illustrious patroness, for the love of God, to send to the pope, to desire him to appoint another person to pronounce Benvenuto's sentence, and do the office that I was to have done; for I renounce it, and nothing shall ever prevail on me to comply with such orders." Having thus delivered his sentiments, he departed with the greatest demonstrations of sorrow and concern. The duchess exclaimed, with an air of indignation, "Is this the justice administered in Rome by God's Vicar upon earth? The duke, my first husband, greatly patronised this man, on account of his abilities and his virtues, and would not let him return to Rome, because

he took great delight in his company." Having spoken thus, she left the place murmuring, and expressing the highest disapprobation of the pope's proceedings. Pier Luigi's lady, who was called Signora Jeronima, then repaired to his Holiness, and falling upon her knees in the presence of several cardinals, pleaded my cause with such eloquence, that the pope was covered with confusion, and said, "For your sake, madam, we will proceed no further against him,—not that we were ever bent on his destruction." The pope expressed himself thus, because the cardinals, who were present, had heard the words of that noble-spirited lady.

I continued in prison in the most dreadful agitation, my heart beating violently with terror; and even the men who were to perform the cruel office of executioners were in some disorder. At last dinner-time approached, when all present departed, and I had my victuals brought me: at this sight I said with surprise, "Now, indeed, truth has been too powerful for the malignant influence of the stars! I therefore entreat the Almighty to deliver me from this danger, if it be His divine pleasure." I then began to eat; and as I had at first resolutely made up my mind to my expected death, I now cordially entertained the animating hope of my deliverance. Having dined heartily, I remained without seeing or hearing anything farther till an hour after sunset, when the captain of the city-guards came with a considerable number of his followers, who put me again upon the same seat on which I had been conveyed the evening before to that prison. He spoke to me in the most kind and obliging manner, and bidding me banish all fear, commanded his followers to take care of me, and in particular to avoid touching my broken leg. Thus they carried me to the castle from whence I had made my escape; and when we had ascended pretty high, to a little court, there for a short time they set me down.

CHAPTER XXV

Soon after the constable of the castle, though diseased and afflicted, caused himself to be carried to the place where I was confined, and said to me, "So, have I caught you again?"—"'Tis true, you have," answered I; "but you see I escaped, as I told you I would; and if I had not been sold, under the papal faith for a bishopric, by a Venetian cardinal to a Roman of the Farnese family, both of whom, in so doing, violated the most sacred laws, you never would have had this opportunity of retaking me; but since they have thus misused me, you also may do your worst, for I now care for nothing more in this world." The poor gentleman then began to make terrible exclamations, crying out, "So, so! life and death are equally indifferent to this man, who is more daring and presumptuous in his present condition than when he was well. Put him there under the garden, and mention not his name any more to me, for he is the cause of my death." I was accordingly carried to a very dark room under the garden, where there was a great quantity of water, full of tarantulas and other poisonous insects. A mattress was thrown me covered with a blanket, and that evening I had no supper, but was fast locked in, and so I continued till the next day. At three in the afternoon my dinner was brought, and I desired those who came with it to let me have some of my books, that I might amuse myself with reading. They made me no answer, but mentioned my request to the poor constable, who was desirous to know everything I said.

The next morning they brought me a Bible of mine in the vulgar tongue, with another book, containing the Chronicles of Villani. Upon my asking for some other books, I was told that I should have no more, and that I had too many already. Thus wretchedly did I drag on my time,

lying upon the rotten mattress above mentioned. In three days everything in the room was under water, so that I could hardly stir an inch, as my leg was broken; and when I wanted to get out of bed, I was obliged to crawl along with great difficulty. For about an hour and a half of the day I enjoyed a little of the reflected light of the sun, which entered my wretched cell by a very small aperture; and that was all the time I had to read. I passed the remainder both of the day and night patiently in the dark, revolving in my mind the most serious thoughts on God, and on the frail condition of human nature. I had scarce any doubt but I should there in a few days end my miserable life. However, I made myself as easy as I could, and was comforted with the reflection, that it would have been much worse to feel the excruciating pangs of being flayed alive: whereas, in my circumstances, at that time I passed away my life in a sort of doze, which was much more agreeable than my former situation. Thus by degrees I found my spirits so far broken that my happy temperament became habituated to this purgatory.

When I found myself thus reconciled to my condition, I formed a resolution to bear up under my unhappy lot as well as I could. I commenced the Bible from the beginning, and perused it every day with so much attention, and took such delight in it, that if it had been in my power I should have done nothing else but read; but as soon as the light failed me, I felt all the misery of my confinement, and grew so impatient that I several times was going to lay violent hands upon myself. However, as I was not allowed a knife, I had not the means of carrying my design into execution. I once, notwithstanding, contrived to place a thick plank of wood over my head, and propped it in the manner of a trap, so that if it had fallen upon me, it would instantly have crushed me to death; but when I had put the whole pile in readiness, and was just going to loosen the plank, and let it fall upon my head, I was seized by something invisible, pushed

four cubits from the place, and terrified to such a degree that I became quite insensible. In this condition I remained from break of day till three in the afternoon, when my dinner was brought me. The persons that attended me must have been with me several times before I heard them; for when I recovered my senses, I heard Captain Sandrino Monaldi enter the cell, exclaiming, "Unfortunate man, what a pity it is that such merit should have such an end." Upon hearing these words, I opened my eyes, and saw several priests in their sacerdotal robes, who cried out aloud, "How came you to tell us that he was dead?" Bozza made answer,—"I said so, because I found him lifeless." They immediately removed me from the place where I lay, and threw the mattress, which was quite rotten, out of the cell. Upon telling the constable what they had seen, he ordered me another mattress. Having afterwards reflected within myself, what it could be that prevented me from carrying my design into execution, I took it for granted that it was some divine power, or, in other words, my guardian angel.

Afterwards at night there appeared to me in a dream a wonderful being, in form resembling a beautiful youth, who said to me in a reprimanding tone, "Do you know who gave you that body, which you would have destroyed before the time of its dissolution?" My imagination was impressed as if I had answered, that I acknowledged to have received it from the great God of nature. "Do you, then," replied he, "despise His gifts, that you attempt to deface and destroy them? Trust in His providence, and never give way to despair whilst His divine assistance is at hand:" with many more admirable exhortations, of which I cannot now recollect the thousandth part. I began to reflect within myself that this angelical apparition had spoken the truth: so having cast my eyes round the prison, I perceived a few rotten bricks, which I rubbed together, and made of them a sort of mash. I then crawled along as well as I could to the door of the prison,

and gnawed with my teeth till I had unloosed a splinter: this done I waited for the time that the light shone into my cell, which was from half-an-hour past four till half-an-hour past five, and then I began to write as well as I could with the composition above mentioned upon one of the blank leaves of my Bible; and reproved my soul, which scorned to continue any longer in this world, and it answered my body, excusing itself; the body then suggested hopes that all would be well. Thus did I write a sort of dialogue between my soul and body, the purport of which was as follows:—

BODY

Say, plaintive and desponding soul,
Why thus so loth on earth to stay?

SOUL

In vain we strive 'gainst Heaven's control;
Since life's a pain, let's haste away.

BODY

Ah, wing not hence thy rapid flight,
Content thyself, nor fate deplore:
New scenes of joy and pure delight
Heaven still for thee may have in store.

SOUL

I then consent to stay a while,
Freedom once more in hopes to gain;
The rest of life with ease beguile,
And dread no more the rattling chain.

Having at length recovered my strength and vigour, after I had composed myself and resumed my cheerfulness of mind, I continued to read my Bible, and so used my eyes to that darkness, that though I was at first able to

read only an hour and a half, I could at length read three hours. I then reflected on the wonderful power of the Almighty upon the hearts of simple men, who had carried their enthusiasm so far as to believe firmly that God would indulge them in all they wished for; and I promised myself the assistance of the Most High, as well through His mercy as on account of my innocence. Thus turning constantly to the Supreme Being, sometimes in prayer, sometimes in silent meditations on the divine goodness, I was totally engrossed by these heavenly reflections, and came to take such delight in pious meditations. that I no longer thought of past misfortunes; on the contrary, I was all day long singing psalms and many other compositions of mine, in which I celebrated and praised the Deity. At this time nothing gave me so much pain and torment as my nails, which grew to a most immoderate length. I could not touch myself without being cut by them; neither was I able to put on my clothes, because they pricked and gave me the most exquisite pain. My teeth likewise rotted in my mouth, and this I perceived, because the foul teeth being pushed forward by the sound ones, and at last obstructing the gums, the stumps came beyond their sockets: when I saw this, I pulled them as it were out of a scabbard, without any pain or effusion of blood: in this manner I got them out pretty easily. Then being reconciled to my other sufferings, one time I sang, another time I prayed, and sometimes wrote with the compound of brick-dust. I began a few stanzas in praise of the prison, in which I related all the accidents that had befallen me: these stanzas shall be inserted in their proper place.

The constable of the castle sent several times privately to inquire how I went on. On the last of July I expressed great joy, recollecting the festival which is generally celebrated at Rome on the first of August; and I said within myself: "Hitherto have I kept this delightful holiday in worldly vanity, this year I will keep it with the Almighty:" at the same time I reflected, how much happier I was at

this festival than at any of the former. The spies who heard me express these sentiments, repeated them to the constable, who said, with surprise and indignation: "Good God! this man triumphs and lives happily in all his distress, while I am miserable in the midst of affluence, and suffer death on his account! Go directly and put him into the deepest subterranean cell of the castle, in which the preacher Fojano was starved to death; perhaps when he sees himself in so wretched a situation, he may at last come to himself."

Captain Sandrino Monaldi accordingly entered my cell, attended by about twenty of the constable's servants, who found me upon my knees praying. I never once turned about, nor took any notice of them; on the contrary, I worshipped God the Father, surrounded with a host of angels, and Christ rising victorious over death, which I had drawn upon the wall with a piece of charcoal that I had picked off the ground. After four months that I had been obliged to keep my bed with my broken leg, and so often dreamed that angels came to cure it, it had at length become quite sound, as if it had never been broken at all. Hence it was that a band of armed men rushed in upon me at once, seeming nevertheless to dread me as a poisonous dragon. The captain said to me: "You see there is a strong body of us, and we have made noise enough upon entering the cell; why then did you not turn about?" At these words I guessed the worst that could befall me, and being long inured to sufferings, I made this answer: "To God, the King of heaven, have I turned my soul, my contemplation, and all my vital spirits; and to you I have turned exactly what suits you; for what is good in me you are neither able to see nor touch: so do whatever you please to that part of me which is in your power." The captain then, quite frightened, and not knowing what I intended to do, said to four of the boldest of his followers: "Throw your arms on one side." As soon as they had done so, he cried out to them: "Fall on

him quickly, and seize him; is he the devil himself, that we should be so much afraid of him? hold him fast, and do not suffer him to escape." I being thus roughly handled and ill-treated, expected much worse than what afterwards befell me: I therefore lifted up my heart to Christ, and said: "O just God! Thou who upon that high tree didst expiate all our sins, why is my innocence to suffer for offences that I am ignorant of? Nevertheless, Thy will be done." Whilst they were carrying me off with a lighted torch, I thought they intended to throw me into the sink of Sammalo; that is the name of a frightful place, where many have been swallowed up alive, by falling from thence into a well under the foundations of the castle. As this happened not to be my lot, I thought myself very fortunate; they however put me into the dismal cell in which Fojano was starved to death, and there they left me without doing me any further harm. As soon as I found myself alone, I began to sing the following psalms:

"Out of the depths I have cried unto Thee, O Lord," &c.
"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving kindness," &c.
"Truly my soul waiteth upon God," &c.

That whole day, which was the first of August, I solemnised with God; and my heart continually exulted with faith and hope. In two days they took me out of that dungeon, and carried me again to the cell where I had drawn the figures above mentioned: when I came there, the sight of the images on the wall made me weep with joy and gladness of heart. The constable, after that, wanted every day to know what I did, and what I said. The pope having heard all that had passed, and that the physicians had already despaired of the constable's recovery, said: "Before my constable departs this life, as Benvenuto is the cause of his untimely fate, I shall be pleased to hear of his putting that fellow to death in

what manner he thinks proper, in order that he may not die unrevenged."

The constable, having been informed of this speech by Pier Luigi, said to him: "Is the pope then willing that I should wreak my revenge on Benvenuto; and does he put him into my power? If he does, leave me to manage him, I shall know how to wreak a proper revenge." As the pope had borne me the utmost malice and ill-will, so the anger and resentment of the constable were now turned with equal fury against me. Just at this juncture, the invisible being that had prevented my laying violent hands upon myself, came to me, still invisible, but spoke with an audible voice, shook me, made me rise up, and said: "Benvenuto! Benvenuto! lose no time, raise your heart to God in fervent devotion, and cry to Him with the utmost vehemence!" Being seized with a sudden consternation, I fell upon my knees, and said several prayers, together with the whole psalm—

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High," &c.

I then, as it were, spoke with God for a while, and in an instant the same voice, altogether clear and audible, said to me, "Take your repose, and now fear nothing."

The reason of this was, that the constable had given cruel and bloody orders to have me put to death, but all on a sudden revoked them, saying to himself, "Is not this Benvenuto whose cause I have so often espoused, whom I know with certainty to be innocent, and to have suffered all that has been inflicted on him unjustly? How can I expect that God should have mercy upon me, and forgive me my sins, if I do not show mercy to those that have offended me? And why should I hurt a man of worth, who has served me and done me honour? Go, tell him that, instead of putting him to death, I grant him his life and liberty; and shall direct in my will, that no one shall sue him for the expenses he has put me to in

this place." When the pope heard this, he was highly offended.

I continued to put up my usual prayers, kept writing my stanzas, and began to have every night the most joyful and encouraging dreams imaginable. I likewise constantly thought myself visibly in the company of this divine person, whom I had often heard whilst invisible. I asked but one favour of him, that he would carry me where I could see the sun, telling him that was of all things what I desired most, and that if I could see it but once I should die contented, and without repining at any of the miseries and tortures I had gone through; for I now was inured to every hardship, all were become my friends, and nothing gave me any further uneasiness. Some of the constable's over-zealous servants had been in expectation that he would have hanged me, as he himself had threatened, from the very same battlement which I had descended; but when they saw that he had entirely altered his mind they were highly mortified, and were continually trying, by one artifice or another, to put me in fear of my life. But, as I have already observed, I was now so familiarised to these things that none of them terrified me in the least, or had any effect upon my mind: the strongest and almost the only desire which animated my breast was an earnest longing to see the sphere of the sun, the golden orb of day! So continuing to pray with the same earnestness and fervour of devotion to Jesus Christ, I thus expressed myself: "O Thou true son of God! I beseech Thee by Thy birth, by Thy death upon the cross, and by Thy glorious resurrection, that Thou wouldst deem me worthy to see the sun in my dreams at least, if it cannot be otherwise! but if Thou thinkest me worthy of seeing it with these mortal eyes, I promise to visit Thee at Thy holy sepulchre!" These vows did I make, and these prayers did I put up to God on the second of October 1539.

When the next morning came, I awoke at daybreak,

almost an hour before sunrise; and having quitted my wretched couch, I put on a waistcoat, as it began to be cool, and prayed with greater devotion than ever I had done before. I earnestly entreated Christ that He would be graciously pleased to favour me with a divine inspiration, to let me know for what offence I was so severely punished; and since His Divine Majesty did not think me fit to behold the sun even in a dream, I besought Him by His power and His goodness that He would at least deem me worthy of knowing the cause of such rigorous chastisement. When I had uttered these words, some invisible being hurried me away like a whirlwind to a place where he unveiled himself to me in a human form, having the figure of a youth with the first down upon his cheeks, and of a most beautiful countenance, on which a particular gravity was conspicuous. He remained with me, and showed me what was in that place, saying, "Those numerous men whom you see are all who have hitherto been born and died." I then asked him why he brought me thither? To this he answered, "Come forward, and you will soon know the reason." I had in my hand a dagger, and on my back a coat of mail: he led me through that spacious place, and showing me those who travelled several ways to the distance of an infinite number of miles, he conducted me forward, went out at a little door into a place which appeared like a narrow street, and pulled me after him. Upon coming out of the spacious apartment into this street, I found myself unarmed, and in a white shirt, with my head uncovered, standing at the right of my companion. When I saw myself in this situation I was in great astonishment, because I did not know what street I was in: so lifting up my eyes, I saw a high wall in the front of a house, on which the sun darted his refulgent rays. I then said, "O my friend, how shall I contrive to raise myself so as to be able to see the sphere of the sun?" He thereupon showed me several steps which were upon my right hand,

and bade me ascend them. Having gone to a little distance from him, I mounted several of those steps backwards, and began by little and little to see the approaching sun. I ascended as fast as I could in the manner above mentioned, so that I at last discovered the whole solar orb: and because its powerful rays dazzled me, I, upon perceiving the cause of it, opened my eyes, and looking steadfastly on the great luminary, exclaimed, "O brilliant sun! whom I have so long wished to behold; henceforward I desire to view no other object, though the fierce lustre of thy beams quite overpowers and blinds me." In this manner I stood with my eyes fixed on the sun, and after I had continued thus gazing for some time, I saw the whole force of his united rays fall on the left side of his orb; and the rays being removed, I with great delight and equal astonishment contemplated the body of the glorious luminary, and could not but consider the concentring of its beams upon its left as a most extraordinary phenomenon. I meditated profoundly on the divine grace which had manifested itself to me this morning, and thus raised my voice: "O wonderful power! O glorious influence divine! How much more bounteous art thou to me than I expected!" The sun divested of his rays appeared a bath of purest melted gold. Whilst I gazed on this noble phenomenon, I saw the centre of the sun swell and bulge out, and in a moment there appeared a Christ upon the cross formed of the self-same matter as the sun; and so gracious and pleasing was His aspect, that no human imagination could ever form so much as a faint idea of such beauty. As I was contemplating this glorious apparition, I cried out aloud, "A miracle! a miracle! O God! O clemency divine! O goodness infinite! what mercies dost Thou lavish on me this morning!" At the very time that I thus meditated and uttered these words, the figure of Christ began to move towards the side where the rays were concentred; and

the middle of the sun swelled and bulged out as at first. The protuberance having increased considerably was at last converted into the figure of a beautiful Virgin Mary, who appeared to sit with her son in her arms in a graceful attitude, and even to smile; she was between two angels of so divine a beauty, that imagination could not even form an idea of such perfection. I likewise saw in the same sun a figure dressed in sacerdotal robes: this figure turned its back to me, and looked towards the blessed Virgin, holding Christ in her arms. All these things I clearly and plainly saw, and with a loud voice continued to return thanks to the Almighty. This wonderful phenomenon having appeared before me about eight minutes, vanished from my sight, and I was instantly conveyed back to my couch. I then began to make loud exclamations, crying out thus: "It has pleased the Almighty to reveal to me all His glory in a splendour which perhaps no mortal eye ever before beheld: hence I know that I am free, happy, and in favour with God. As for you, unhappy wretches, you will continue in disgrace with Him. Know that I am certain that on All Saints' Day (on which I was born in 1500, the night of the first of November, exactly at twelve o'clock), know, I say, that on the anniversary of that day you will be obliged to take me out of this dismal cell; for I have seen it with my eyes, and it was prefigured on the throne of God. The priest who looked towards Christ, and had his back turned to me, was St. Peter, who pleaded my cause, and appeared to be quite ashamed that such cruel insults should be offered to Christians in his house. So proclaim it everywhere that no one has any further power to hurt me; and tell the pope that if he will supply me with wax or paper to represent the glorious vision sent to me from Heaven, I will certainly convince him of some things of which he now appears to doubt."

The constable, though his physicians had entirely given him over, had recovered a sound mind, and got the

better of all those whims and vapours which used to torment him yearly; so he gave his whole attention to the salvation of his soul: and as he felt great remorse of conscience on my account, and was of opinion that I had been from the beginning, and still continued to be, most cruelly injured, he informed the pope of the extraordinary things which I declared I had seen. The pontiff (who neither believed in God, nor in any other article of religion) sent him word that I was mad, and advised him to think no more about me, but mind his own soul. The constable, having received this answer, sent some of his people to comfort me, and likewise ordered me pen, ink, paper, and wax, with the proper implements to work in wax, as well as his best respects and most courteous expressions of kindness, repeated to me by one of his servants who was my well-wisher. This man was, indeed, in every respect the very reverse of his wicked domestics and others who were for having me put to death. I took the paper and the wax, fell to work, and at my leisure wrote the following sonnet, inscribed to the worthy constable.

SONNET TO THE CONSTABLE OF THE CASTLE OF ST. ANGELO

Could I, my lord, convey in labour'd strain
Some emanation of that light divine
Which late illum'd my soul, I more should gain,
Approved by thee, than were an empire mine.

Would heaven it were but to our Pontiff told,
How to my eyes His glory Christ reveal'd,
Glory which human tongue can ne'er unfold!
Glory from mortal view by clouds conceal'd!

Soon Justice would unbar her iron gate,
Soon thou would'st see vile impious Fury bound,
Would'st hear her rave at Heaven and cruel fate,
And with her cries make all th' expanse resound.

Did I, alas! enjoy the light of day,
Or were my limbs but free and unconfined:
I then could Heaven's unbounded love display,
Smile at my pain, to death and fate resign'd:
The cross I bear would then appear more light,
And freedom's rays dispel the gloom of night.

The day following, when that servant of the constable who was my well-wisher came with my breakfast, I gave him the sonnet: the good man, unknown to his malicious fellow-servants, my enemies, showed it to the constable, who would gladly have released me, being of opinion that the injury done me was in a great measure the cause of his death. He took the sonnet, and having read it several times over said: "These are not the expressions or thoughts of a madman, but of a worthy and virtuous person." He then ordered his secretary to carry it to the pope, and put it into his own hand, at the same time requesting him to set me at liberty. Whilst the secretary was carrying this sonnet to the pope, the constable sent me candles, both for day and night, with all the conveniences that could be wished for in such a place: I thereupon began to recover of my indisposition, which had increased to a very high pitch. The pope read the sonnet, and sent word to the constable that he would soon do something that would please him; and I make no doubt but he would have been willing to release me, had it not been for his son Pier Luigi, who caused me to be detained against his father's inclination. Whilst I was drawing a design of the late wonderful miracle, the constable, sensible of the approach of death, on the morning of All Saints' Day, sent his nephew Piero Ugolino to me, in order to show me some jewels. As soon as I saw them I said within myself: "This is a proof that I shall shortly be at liberty." When I expressed myself to that effect, the young man, who was a person of few words, said to me: "Think no more of that, Benvenuto."—"Take away your jewels," replied I, "for I am under so strict a

confinement that I see no light but what glimmers in this gloomy cell, so that I cannot distinguish the quality of precious stones; but with regard to my release from this prison, before this day expires you will come to deliver me from it. This will positively happen as I tell you, and cannot be otherwise." The young man left the cell, having first ordered me to be locked up; he stayed away above two hours, and then returned, without any armed men, attended only by two boys to support me; and in that manner he conducted me to the large apartments which I occupied at first (I mean in 1538), at the same time allowing me all the conveniences and accommodation I could desire.

A few days after, the constable, who thought I was released, being quite overpowered by the violence of his disorder, departed this life: he was succeeded by Signor Antonio Ugolini, his brother, who had made the deceased constable believe that he had discharged me from my confinement. This Signor Antonio, as far as I could understand, was ordered by the pope to keep me a sort of a prisoner at large, till he should let him know how I was to be disposed of. Signor Durante of Brescia, who has already been spoken of, had entered into a conspiracy with that soldier, now a villain of an apothecary of Prato, to mix some poisonous infusion amongst my food, which was not to operate suddenly, but to produce its effect in about four or five months.

They at first thought of mixing with my meat the powder of a pounded diamond: this is not a poison of itself, but is so excessively hard that it retains its acute angles, differing from other stones, which, when they are pounded, entirely lose the sharpness of their particles, and become round. The diamond alone preserves the acuteness of its angles: hence it follows, that when it enters the stomach with the meat, and the operation of digestion is to be performed, the particles of the diamond stick to the cartilages of the stomach and the bowels; and as the

newly received food is impelled forward, the minute parts of the diamond which adhere to those cartilages, in process of time perforate them; and this causes death: whereas, every other sort of stone or glass, when mixed with meat, is incapable of sticking to the coat of the stomach, and of consequence is voided with the food. The rascal Durante gave for this purpose a diamond of little value to one of the guards belonging to the castle. I was informed that one Lione of Arezzo, a goldsmith, and my inveterate enemy, was employed to pound the diamond; but, as this fellow was very indigent, and the diamond was worth several scores of crowns, he made the guard believe that a certain dust, with which he supplied him, was the pounded diamond designed for my destruction.

On the day that it was administered to me, being a Friday, they put it into all my victuals, into the salad, the sauce, and the soup. I ate very heartily, as I had had no supper the night before, and it happened to be a holiday. I indeed felt the meat crash under my teeth, but never once dreamt of the villainous designs of my enemies. When I had done dinner, as there remained a little of the salad on the dish, I happened to fix my eyes on some of the smallest particles remaining. I immediately took them, and advancing to the window, upon examining them by the light, recollected the unusual crashing above mentioned; then viewing the particles with attention, I was inclined to think, as far as my eye could judge, that a pounded diamond had been mixed with my victuals. Immediately upon this discovery, I concluded myself to be a dead man, and with the most heartfelt sorrow had recourse to my devotion. As I thought my death inevitable, I made a long and fervent prayer to the Almighty, thanking His Divine Majesty for so easy a death: and, as my stars had so ordered it, I thought it a great happiness that my life was to terminate in that manner. I therefore composed myself with the most perfect resignation, and blessed the world and the time that I had lived in it; for

I hoped that I was then departing to a better place by the grace of God, which I thought I had perfectly secured. Whilst I revolved these thoughts in my mind, I had in my hand some of the little grains of the supposed diamond.

But as hope is never totally extinct in the human breast, I had still some glimmering of it left; I therefore laid hold of a little knife, and taking some of the small particles above mentioned, put them upon one of the irons of the prison, then pressing upon them with the point of the knife as hard as I could, I heard the little grains crack: upon this I examined them attentively with my eye, and found that it was really so. Hence I conceived new hopes, and said within myself, "This is not the stone which was intended for me by the villain Durante; it is a small brittle stone, which is not likely to do me any manner of injury:" so, though I had at first formed a resolution not to have recourse to any remedy, but to die in peace, I now altered my mind. But I first returned thanks to God, and blessed poverty, which, though it often causes death, was on this occasion the preserver of my life; for Durante, my mortal enemy, having given a diamond, worth above a hundred crowns, to Lione to pound, his poverty made him keep it for himself, and in lieu of it he pounded for me a counterfeit diamond, not worth above eight pence, thinking, as that was a stone as well as the other, it was equally likely to do the business.

At this very time the Bishop of Pavia, brother to the Count of St. Secondo, called Monsignor Rossi, of Parma, was prisoner in the castle. I called to him with a loud voice, telling him that a parcel of villains had given me a pounded diamond with a murderous intention. I then got one of his servants to show him part of the dust which was left on my plate; yet I did not let him know that what they gave me was no diamond, but maintained that they had certainly poisoned me, knowing that my good friend the constable was dead. I moreover requested him that for the short time I had to live, he would supply me

with bread from his table, being determined to eat nothing that came from them for the future. He thereupon promised to furnish me every day with provisions. This bishop was prisoner in the castle on account of certain plots and intrigues which he had been concerned in at Pavia; and, as he was my friend, I used to call to him through the grate of my prison. Signor Antonio, the new constable, who certainly was not an accomplice in the design upon my life, made a great stir on the occasion, and desired to see the pounded diamond himself, in a persuasion that it was a real diamond; but thinking that the pope was at the bottom of the affair, he chose to take no further notice of it. I was now so circumspect as to eat only of the victuals which were sent me by the bishop, and I continued my stanzas on the prison, setting down every day such new events as befell me. Signor Antonio always sent me my victuals by one Giovanni, of whom mention has already been made, who had been a journeyman apothecary at Prato, and was then a soldier upon duty at the castle. This man was my inveterate enemy, and it was he that had brought me the pounded diamond. I told him that I would eat nothing that came through his hands, unless he first performed the ceremony of tasting it: but he answered me with an air that this ceremony was only for popes. To this I replied that as gentlemen are obliged to perform the office of tasting for the pope, so he who was a soldier, a journeyman apothecary, and a low fellow from Prato, was in duty bound to taste for a Florentine of my character. High words thereupon ensued between us.

After this, Signor Antonio, in some confusion for his past conduct, but intending to make me pay the fees, and other expenses, which his brother had forgiven me, chose another of his servants, who was my friend, to carry me victuals; and the man readily tasted them for me, without any dispute. This servant told me every day that the pope was constantly solicited by Mons. de Monluc, in

the name of the king his master, and that his Holiness seemed to be very unwilling to part with me: he added that Cardinal Farnese, who had formerly been so much my friend and patron, had declared that I must not think of being released from my confinement in haste. Upon hearing this I affirmed that I should recover my liberty in spite of them all. The worthy youth advised me to be quiet, and attempt nothing; but above all, to avoid speaking in that style, as it might prove highly prejudicial to my interest if it came to be known: he at the same time exhorted me to trust in God, and to depend on His Divine Majesty for my deliverance. I made answer "that the goodness of God secured me from all fear of my persecutors."

CHAPTER XXVI

After I had led this melancholy life a few days longer, the Cardinal of Ferrara made his appearance at Rome. Upon going to pay his respects to his Holiness, he was detained to supper; and the pope, being a person of great taste and genius, chose to converse with him concerning all that he had seen curious and worthy of observation in France. The cardinal in the heat of conversation discovered several things which he would otherwise have concealed; and as he knew how to conform himself to the French king's taste, and was equally possessed of the art of pleasing his Holiness, the latter took a much greater liking to him than he was aware of himself, and seemed to be in high spirits, as well on account of this engaging conversation, as of the debauch he committed on the occasion, which he repeated every week, and vomited after it. When the cardinal saw the pope in a good humour, and likely to grant favours, he applied in my behalf, in the name of the king his master, in the most urgent manner imaginable, and expressed himself in such terms

as demonstrated that the French monarch was very solicitous to obtain his request. The holy father thereupon perceiving that his time of vomiting was at hand, and that the great quantity of wine he had poured down his throat was upon the point of operating, said to the cardinal, laughing: "Take Benvenuto home with you directly, without a moment's delay." Thus having given proper orders in the affair, he rose from the table, and the cardinal sent for me that very moment, before the affair could come to the knowledge of Signor Pier Luigi, who would never have consented to my release.

The pope's order was brought to the prison by two of the Cardinal of Ferrara's gentlemen, in the dead of night: they took me out of the castle, and conducted me to the cardinal, who gave me the kindest reception imaginable. I was well lodged at his house, and enjoyed all the happiness which recovered liberty can bestow. Signor Antonio, brother to the governor, and who was then possessed of his place, insisted upon my paying all my expenses, as well as the fees and gratifications required by the officers of justice, and others of that stamp: in short, he was resolved to act in every respect contrary to the will of the deceased governor. This affair cost me many a score of crowns. The cardinal encouraged me, bidding me take care of myself if I valued my life; adding that if he had not that evening got me out of prison, I should, in all probability, have ended my days in confinement; as he was informed that the pope had already repented his having set me at liberty. I must therefore look back a little to recollect some circumstances that occur in the verses which I composed when a prisoner. During the time that I passed in the apartment of the cardinal, and afterwards in the pope's privy garden, amongst other friends that visited me, there came a cashier of Signor Bindo Altoviti, whose name was Bernardo Galluzzi, whom I had entrusted with the value of several hundred crowns. This young man came to the privy garden with an inten-

tion to settle accounts, and restore to me all that I had deposited with him. I told him that I could not put my property into the hands of a dearer friend, nor into any place where it could be more secure. My friend, upon this, seemed to decline keeping it, and I, by a sort of violence, obliged him to continue his trust. When I was liberated from the castle this last time, I understood that poor Bernardo Galluzzi was a bankrupt, and that I had consequently lost all my money.

During my confinement I had, moreover, a terrible dream, in which a person appeared to write certain words of great importance upon my forehead with a reed, at the same time strictly charging me not to divulge what he had been doing; and when I awoke in the morning I perceived that my forehead was actually marked. In the verses composed during my confinement there are several events of a similar nature. I likewise received a circumstantial account, without knowing to whom I owed my intelligence, of all that afterwards happened to Signor Pier Luigi; and it was so clear and express in every article that I have often thought I received it from a heavenly angel.

Another circumstance I must not omit, which is one of the most extraordinary things that ever happened to any man, and I mention it in justice to God and the wondrous ways of His providence towards me. From the very moment that I beheld the phenomenon, there appeared (strange to relate!) a resplendent light over my head, which has displayed itself conspicuously to all that I have thought proper to show it to, but those were very few. This shining light is to be seen in the morning over my shadow till two o'clock in the afternoon, and it appears to the greatest advantage when the grass is moist with dew; it is likewise visible in the evening at sunset. This phenomenon I took notice of when I was at Paris, because the air is exceedingly clear in that climate, so that I could distinguish it there much plainer than in Italy, where mists are much more frequent; but I can still see it even

here, and show it to others, though not to the same advantage as in France. I shall now lay before the reader the verses which I composed during my confinement and in praise of the prison. I shall then relate all the good and evil which befell me upon a variety of different occasions, as likewise the various events of the subsequent course of my life.

These verses I inscribe to Luca Martini.

THE CAPITOLO

WRITTEN DURING THE AUTHOR'S IMPRISONMENT IN THE CASTLE OF ST. ANGELO

"He who would sound the depths of power divine,
Should for a time in gloomy dungeon dwell,
Where grief corrodes and harrows up the soul.
Domestic care should prey upon his mind,
To sorrow and to crosses long inured,
By various troubles and by tempests toss'd.
Would you improve in virtue's rigid lore
By sad imprisonment? Your lot should be
Unjust confinement, long in grief your chain
You comfortless should drag, and no relief,
No kind assistance from a friend receive.
You should, by gaolers, of your property
Be cruelly deprived, and roughly used,
Nor ever hope for liberty again.
Frantic with rage you should your prison break,
Urged by some fell oppressor's cruel wrongs,
And then in deeper dungeon be confin'd.
Dear Luca, listen with attentive ear,
Whilst I my dire calamities relate:
What sufferings could be worse? To break a leg,
In moist, damp, noisome cell to be confined,
Without a cloak to shelter me from cold!
Think what I suffer'd in these cells immured

Lonely, from human converse quite debarr'd,
My daily pittance brought me by a slave,
A surly monster silent and severe.
Think to what ills ambition does expose,
What dangers threaten an aspiring soul.
Think what it was to have no place to sit,
Or rest my head on, but a corner foul;
At every hour of tedious night and day
By cares unceasing to be kept awake.
O think how dismal that, to this sad cell,
None should approach but mutes in silence wrapp'd,
Who sternly frown'd, nor e'er an answer deign'd.
How sad it was that in such horrid cave
The poet's fancy wont to soar, to rove
In sprightly sallies, now should be confined
To pine the solitary hours away!
How sad to be restrain'd from pen and ink,
Nor e'en allow'd, the poet's sad relief,
To scrawl with charcoal on my prison walls!
But hold, my sorrows make me deviate far
From the first purpose of my moral song.
I mean a prison's praises to proclaim,
To show what useful lessons may be learn'd
In deep distress and sharp affliction's school:
Few inmates of such dreary solitudes
Were ever equal to this arduous task.
In those receptacles of guilt and vice
The man of virtue seldom is immured,
Except when fallen a victim to the hate
Of ministers and servile tools of power:
Except through envy, anger, or despite.
Confined in dungeon deep, in gloomy cell
The prisoner oft invokes God's awful name,
Yet feels within the torments of the damn'd.
Howe'er traduced and blacken'd by the tongue
Of calumny, to reputation lost,
Pass two unhappy years in prison pent,

You'll then come out reform'd; with manners pure,
The world will love you, will forget the past,
Imprisonment will all your faults atone.
Within the darksome round of prison walls—
Relentless walls where comfort never dwells!
The mental powers, the faculties decline,
The body like its covering decays;
Yet here, too, grossest wits by constant woe
Are sharpen'd, sublimated, and refined.
Genius 'midst sufferings imps her wings and soars,
And from these gloomy cells, in prospect bright,
Though distant, heaven's blest regions are descried.
Here how invention's aid our wants supplies,
And greatest difficulties can surmount.
Staring aghast I stalk about the room,
My hair with horror bristling on my head,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine;
Next from a panel of the door I tear
A splinter with my teeth, expedient strange!
Cruel necessity such means suggests.
A brick reduced to powder then I mix
With water, kneading both into a mash.
Poetic genius fill'd my labouring breast,
And all my soul was by the muse inspired.
But to resume the subject of these lays:
He who desires to know and to enjoy
The good that Heaven bestows upon our kind,
Should first be practis'd in the train of ills,
Which in His wisdom God inflicts on man.
A prison prompts and teaches every art:
If medical assistance you require,
Through ev'ry open'd pore it makes you sweat.
With some strange virtue are its walls endued
To make you learned, eloquent, and brave.
And by enchantment wonderful its power
Your raptured fancy ever can delight
With florid, gay ideas, fairy scenes.

Though wisdom is in prison dearly bought,
Happy the man who there is taught her lore;
The genius is not by confinement cramp'd,
But spreads untutor'd its advent'rous wings
To treat of gravest subjects, war or peace:
His efforts always with success are crown'd.
What steadiness the mind in durance learns!
No more elate by fortune's wanton smiles,
Nor sunk dejected and depress'd with woe.
Perhaps you'll tell me all these years are lost,
That wisdom never was in prison learn'd.
I speak but what I feel: experience shows,
That e'en a dungeon may be wisdom's school.
But would to heaven our laws were so contrived
That guilty men no longer had the power
To 'scape that prison which their crimes deserve.
The man of low degree, by fortune doom'd
To drudge for a subsistence, there should gain
Experience, there should learn to act his part.
He thus would be less liable to err,
Less prone to stray from reason's equal path;
The world would then no longer be a stage
Of dire confusion, and a chaos wild.
Whilst in a gloomy dungeon's dark recess
Monks, priests, and men of rank I saw confined,
But fewest still of those who for their deeds
Seem'd most deserving of that rigid lot.
What poignant grief pervades a prisoner's breast,
When some sad partner of his dire distress,
Loose from his chain, first sees the prison door
Op'd to admit him to bless'd liberty!
What cruel anguish wrings his tortured breast!
He wishes that he never had been born,
Though long corroding grief upon my heart
Relentless prey'd, though oft my labouring brain
Has almost grown distracted with my woes,
'Midst all my ills some comfort strange I found,

Unknown to those who slumber life away
Upon the down of ease, whose happy lids
Were never sullied with a gushing tear.
What raptures would transport my ravish'd breast
Should some one say to me with friendly voice,
Hence, Benvenuto, go, depart in peace;
How often has a deadly pale o'erspread
My livid cheeks, whilst in a dungeon deep
I pined and sigh'd my hapless hours away!
Deprived of liberty I now no more
To France or Florence can at will repair!
Though were I even in France, I might not there
Meet tender treatment to relieve my woe.
I say not this against that noble soil,
Whose lilies have illumined heaven and earth;
But amidst roses thistles often grow.
I saw an emblem from the heavens descend
Swiftly amongst the vain deluded crowd,
And a new light was kindled on the rock:
He who on earth and in high heaven explains
The truth, and told me that the Castle bell
Should, ere I thence could make escape, be broke.
Then in a vision mystic I beheld
A long black bier on every side adorn'd
With broken lilies, crosses, and with plants;
And many persons I on couches saw
Diseased and rack'd with anguish and with pain.
I saw the demon, the tormenting fiend
That persecutes the souls of mortal men,
Now with his horrors these, now those appal:
To me he turn'd, and said, I'll pierce the heart
Of whomsoever hurts or injures thee.
Herewith upon my forehead words he wrote
Obscure, profound, with Peter's mystic reed,
And silence solemnly enjoin'd me thrice.
I saw the power Divine, who leads the sun
His great career, and checks him in his course,

Amidst His court celestial brightly shine.
The dazzled eyes of mortals seldom see
A vision with such various glories fraught.
I heard a solitary bird of night
Sing on a rock a dismal fun'ral dirge;
I thence inferr'd with certainty, this note
To me announces life, but death to you.
My just complaint I then both sang and wrote;
Implored God's pardon and His friendly aid;
For sight began to fail me, and I felt
The iron hand of Death upon my eyes.
Never was lion, tiger, wolf, or bear
Of human blood more thirsty, than the foe
That now with furious rage attack'd my life;
More poisonous never was the viper's bite:
The foe, I mean a cruel captain, came
Attended with a band of ruffians vile.
Just as rapacious bailiffs haste to seize
A trembling debtor with relentless hands,
So rush'd those sons of brutal force upon me.
'Twas on the first of August that they came
To drag me to a dismal dungeon, worse
By far than that in which so long I'd groan'd:
A cell in which the most abandon'd crew,
The refuse of the prison are confined.
Yet in this sad distress I soon received,
Though unexpected, succour and relief.
My foes, when thus their hellish spite they saw
Defeated, to fell poison had recourse;
But here again th' Almighty interposed,
For first I ever turned my thoughts to God,
And loud His grace and aid Divine implored.
My poignant anguish being thus assuaged,
Whilst I prepared to render up my soul,
Resign'd to pass unto a better state,
I saw an angel from the heav'ns descend
Holding a glorious palm-branch in his hand;

With looks then joyous, placid, and serene,
He promised to my life a longer date.
The angel spoke to me in terms like these:
'Thy foes shall all be humbled to the dust,
And thou shalt lead a life of lasting bliss,
Favour'd by heaven and earth's eternal sire.'"

CHAPTER XXVII

WHILST I lodged in the palace of the Cardinal of Ferrara I was universally respected, and received more visits than even at first; everybody expressing the highest surprise at my having emerged out of such distress, and struggled through such a variety of hardships and miseries. As I was recovering by degrees, I exerted my utmost efforts to become again expert in my profession, and took great delight in copying out the above verses. The better to re-establish my health, I rode out to take the air, having first asked the good cardinal's leave, and borrowed his horses. Upon these occasions I was generally accompanied by two young Roman citizens, one of whom was bred to my own business, the other not. When I was out of Rome, I steered my course towards Tagliacozzo, thinking to meet with my pupil Ascanio, of whom mention has so frequently been made. Upon my arrival I found Ascanio there, with his father, his brothers, his sisters, and his step-mother. I met with so kind a reception, and was so greatly caressed during a stay of two days, that I am unable to give the reader an adequate idea of their civilities. I then set out for Rome, and carried Ascanio with me. By the way we talked of business; and such an effect had this conversation upon me that I grew quite impatient to be again at Rome in order to resume my trade.

Upon our return to that capital I fell to work with the

utmost assiduity; and happening accidentally to find a silver basin, which I had undertaken for the cardinal just before my imprisonment (at the time that I set about this basin, I likewise began a fine cup, of which I was robbed, with several other things of great value), I set Paolo, who has been spoken of above, to work on the basin; I myself took in hand the cup, which consisted of round figures in basso-rilievo. In like manner the basin contained little round figures and fishes in basso-rilievo; and it was so rich, and the workmanship so exquisite, that all who saw it were in the utmost surprise, as well on account of the force of genius and invention in the design, as of the admirable polish which the young artists had displayed in the execution of the work. The cardinal came at least twice every day to see me, accompanied by Signor Luigi Alamanni and Signor Gabbriello Cesano: upon these occasions we passed an hour or two merrily, though I had a great deal of business which required despatch. He at the same time put several other works into my hands, and employed me to make his pontifical seal, which was about the size of the hand of a child twelve years old. Upon this seal I carved two little pieces of history; one was John preaching in the Wilderness, the other was St. Ambrose routing the Arians, represented on horseback, and with a whip in his hand. The design of this seal was so bold and admirable, the workmanship so exquisite, and the polish so fine, that everybody said I had surpassed the great Lautizio, whose talents were confined to this branch alone; and the cardinal, in the joy of his heart, ostentatiously compared it to the other seals of the Roman cardinals, which were almost all by the above-mentioned artist.

At the same time that the cardinal gave me the other two works, he employed me to make a model of a salt-cellar, but desired it should be in a different taste from the common ones. Signor Luigi said many excellent things concerning this salt-cellar; Signor Gabbriello Cesano likewise spoke admirably upon the subject; but the cardinal, who

had listened with the utmost attention, and seemed highly pleased with the designs which these two ingenious gentlemen proposed, said to me: "Benvenuto, the plans of Signor Luigi and Signor Gabbriello please me so highly that I am in doubt which to give the preference to; I therefore leave it to you to make a choice, as you are charged with executing the work." I then said: "Gentlemen, do but consider of what importance the sons of kings and emperors are, and what a wonderful splendour and emanation of the Godhead is conspicuous in them; yet ask but a poor humble shepherd which he has the greatest love and affection for, these children of emperors and kings or his own; he will doubtless answer you that he loves his own offspring best. In like manner, I have a strong paternal affection for my own child; so that the first model I intend to show you, most reverend patron, shall be my own work and invention; for many plans appear very plausible when delivered in words, which have but an indifferent effect when carried into execution." I then turned about to the two virtuosi, and said: "O gentlemen, you have given us your plans in words, but I will show you mine in practice." Thereupon Signor Luigi Alamanni, with a smiling countenance, spoke a long time in my favour, and that in the most complaisant manner imaginable: in doing this he acquitted himself with extraordinary grace, for he had a pleasing aspect, an elegant figure, and an harmonious voice. Signor Gabbriello Cesano was quite the reverse of him—as ill-shaped in his person as ungracious in his manner—and when he spoke he acquitted himself awkwardly. The plan proposed by Signor Luigi was, that I should represent a Venus with a Cupid, and several fine devices round them suited to the subject. Signor Gabbriello was for having me represent Amphitrite, the spouse of Neptune, and the Tritons, Neptune's attendants, with other ornaments, very fine in idea, but extremely difficult to be carried into execution.

I designed an oval, almost two-thirds of a cubit in size;

and upon this oval, as the sea appears to embrace the earth, I made two figures about a hand high, in a sitting posture, with the legs of one within those of the other, as some long branches of the sea are seen to enter the land; and in the hand of a male figure, representing the ocean, I put a ship, contrived with great art, in which was deposited a large quantity of salt; under this, I represented four sea-horses, and in the right hand of the ocean I put his trident. The earth I represented by a female figure, the most elegant and beautiful I could form an idea of, leaning with one hand against a grand and magnificent temple; this was to hold the pepper. In the other hand I put a cornucopia, adorned with all the embellishments I could think of. To complete this idea, in that part which appeared to be earth, I represented all the most beautiful animals which that element produces. In the part which stood for the sea I designed the finest sort of fish and shells which so small a space was capable of containing; in the remainder of the oval I placed several grand and noble ornaments. Having then waited till the cardinal came with the two virtuosi above mentioned, I in their presence produced my model in wax. The first who spoke was Signor Gabbriello Cesano, who made a great stir upon the occasion, and said: "This is the work that the lives of ten men would be hardly sufficient to execute; and you, most reverend cardinal, who desire to have it finished in your lifetime, are never likely to see it. Benvenuto has, indeed, thought proper to show you some of his offspring; but he has not done like us, who proposed only such things as were feasible; he has brought you a plan which it is impossible to finish." Upon this Signor Luigi Alamanni took my part. The cardinal, however, said that he did not choose to be concerned in so great an undertaking. I thereupon turned to them, and replied: "Most reverend cardinal, I must beg leave to tell you that I expect to complete this work at all events, and you will see it, when finished, a hundred times more luxuriant

in ornaments than its model. I even hope to have more than sufficient time to bring works of much greater consequence to perfection." The cardinal said, in a passion: "If you do not make it for the King of France, to whom I intend to introduce you, there is no likelihood of your finishing it for any other person." He then showed me the letters, in which the king wrote to him to return directly, and bring Benvenuto with him. Seeing this, I lifted up my hands to heaven, and exclaimed: "When will that *directly* come?" He bid me lose no time, but settle my affairs at Rome in ten days.

The time for our departure being arrived, the cardinal made me a present of a fine horse, to which he gave the name of Tournon, because it was a present from a cardinal of that name. Paolo and Ascanio, my apprentices, were likewise provided with horses. The cardinal divided his retinue, which was very considerable: the chief part of it he took with him, following the road to Romagna, in order to visit our Lady of Loreto, and then to proceed to his own house at Ferrara; the other part he sent towards Florence—this was superior in number to the former, and made a grand appearance, on account of the beauty of the horses. He desired me to keep him company, if I had a mind to travel in security, telling me that if I did otherwise, my life would be in danger. I gave him to understand that I proposed to follow his direction; but, as what is decreed by Heaven must necessarily come to pass, it pleased God to recall to my memory my poor sister, who was so much concerned for the great misfortunes I had undergone. I, at the same time, thought of my cousins, who were nuns at Viterbo, one of them abbess, and the other treasurer, insomuch that between them they governed that rich monastery. As they had suffered so much on my account, and prayed for me so fervently, I took it for granted that I had obtained the grace of God by virtue of the prayers of these good women. These things occurring at once to my memory, I took the road to Florence.

Thus, though I might have had all my charges borne by travelling with the cardinal and his retinue, I chose to perform the journey at my own expense, taking with me as a companion an excellent clockmaker named Cherubino, who was my intimate friend. As we happened to meet accidentally upon the road, we chose to perform this agreeable journey together. When I set out from Rome, on Monday in Passion Week, I was attended only by my two apprentices: at Monterosi I came up with the company above mentioned; and as I had signified my intention of travelling with the cardinal, I did not imagine that any of my enemies would have thought of waylaying me. But I might have met with an unlucky disaster at Monterosi; for a body of men well armed had gone before us to that town, with a design to attack me; and so it happened that, whilst we were at dinner, these men, who had discovered that I had quitted the cardinal's retinue, lay in ambush for me, and were preparing to perpetrate their villainous designs. Just at this juncture the retinue of the cardinal came up, and with it I travelled joyfully to Viterbo, without any sort of danger. I went on several miles before, and the bravest men in the cardinal's retinue had a high esteem for me.

Being, by God's providence, arrived safe and in good health at Viterbo, I was received with the utmost kindness by my sisters and the whole monastery. After leaving that city with the company above mentioned, we rode on sometimes before and sometimes behind the retinue of the cardinal, so that by six o'clock on Holy Thursday evening we were come within a stage of Siena. Perceiving that there were some returned horses at the inn, and that the postmaster waited an opportunity to give them to travellers to ride back to Siena, I instantly dismounted from my horse Tournon, and putting my saddle and stirrups upon him, gave a piece of money to one of the postboys; then leaving my horse to the care of my apprentices, I spurred on, in order to get to Siena half-an-hour before the rest, that I

might have time to visit my friends and transact some business in the town. Though this horse carried me with tolerable speed, I did not, however, ride it too hard. As soon as we arrived, I took rooms at a good inn for five persons: the horse I sent back by the ostler to the post-house, which was without the gate that leads to Camollia; and upon it I had, through forgetfulness, left my stirrups and saddle. We passed the night very merrily on Holy Thursday.

The next day, which was Good Friday, I recollected my stirrups and saddle. Upon my sending for them, the post-master made answer that he would not return them because I had overworked his horse. Several messages passed between us, but he persisted in refusing to return them, and that with much opprobrious and abusive language. The innkeeper at whose house I lay, said to me at the same time: "It is well for you if he does not do something worse than keep your saddle and your stirrups: he is one of the most insolent men that has ever had the place of postmaster in this city; and he has two sons who are soldiers, desperate fellows, and more insolent than their father himself." He therefore advised me to make all the haste I could in buying whatever I might stand in need of, and leave the place directly, without entering into any contest with him. I thereupon bought a pair of stirrups, thinking to recover my saddle by fair means; and as I was extremely well mounted, armed with a coat of mail, and had an excellent piece at the pommel of the saddle, I was not in the least intimidated by this report of the insolence and brutality of the postmaster. I had likewise used my apprentices to wear coats of mail under their clothes; and I had great confidence in my young Roman, who seemed never to have neglected this defence whilst we were at Rome. Even Ascanio, though in his tender years, wore a coat of mail; and as it was Good Friday, I imagined that the folly of these wretches would for that day subside.

We soon arrived at the posthouse of Camollia; and I

immediately saw and knew the postmaster, by tokens that had been given me, particularly by his being blind of an eye. I went up to him, and leaving my two young fellows and the rest of the company at a little distance, said mildly: "Mr. Postmaster, when I assure you that I have not ridden your horse very hard, why do you make a difficulty of restoring me my saddle and stirrups?" He answered with all the violence and brutality I had been prepared for. I thereupon said to him: "What! are you not a Christian, and do you intend to bring a scandal both upon yourself and me this Good Friday?" He answered that he cared neither for Good Friday nor the devil's Friday, and that if I did not get about my business, he would soon, with his long pike, lay me sprawling upon the ground, musket and all. Upon his speaking to me thus roughly, there came up an old gentleman of Siena, a very polite, worthy man, who was just come from performing the devotions usual on that day. Having, though at a distance, heard what I had to say for myself, and perceiving that I was in the right, he boldly reproved the postmaster, took my part, and reprimanded the two sons for behaving rudely to strangers, by swearing and blaspheming, and thereby bringing a scandal upon the city of Siena. The two young fellows, sons to the postmaster, shook their heads, and without returning any answer retired. The incensed father, exasperated by what was said by the worthy gentleman that interposed in my behalf, ran at me with his long pike, cursing and blaspheming, and swore he would instantly be the death of me. When I saw him thus determined, I, to keep him off for a while, presented the muzzle of my piece at him. He, notwithstanding, flew at me with redoubled fury; and the gun which I held in my hand, though in a proper position for my own defence, was not rightly levelled at him, but, the muzzle being raised aloft, it went off of itself. The ball hit against the arch over the street door, and having rebounded, entered the postmaster's windpipe, who instantly fell dead upon the ground.

His sons thereupon rushed out of the house, and one having taken down arms from a rack, whilst the other seized his father's pike, they both fell upon the young men in my company: the son who had the pike wounded Paolo, the Roman, in the left breast; and the other fell upon a Milanese in our company, a foolish fellow, who would not ask quarter or declare that he had no connection with me, but defending himself against a partisan with a short stick which he had in his hand, he found himself unable to parry his adversary's weapon, so as to prevent his being slightly wounded in the mouth. Signor Cherubino was in the habit of a priest, and though he was an excellent clockmaker, as I observed before, he had several benefices conferred on him by the pope, which produced him a considerable income. Ascanio was well armed, and stood his ground bravely, instead of offering to fly like the Milanese, so that these two received no manner of hurt.

I spurred my horse, and whilst it was in full gallop, quickly charged my piece again: then I returned back in a passion, thinking that what I had done was but a trifle; for, as I thought my two young men were killed, I advanced with a firm resolution to die myself. My horse had not gone many paces back, when I met them both coming towards me. I asked them whether they were hurt, and Ascanio made answer that Paolo had received a mortal wound with a pike. I thereupon said to the latter: "My dear Paolo, how comes this? Could a pike force its way through a coat of mail?" He then told me that he had put his coat of mail into his cloak-bag. I replied: "What! this morning? It seems then that coats of mail are worn at Rome to make a show before the ladies; but in times of danger, when they might be of use, they are put into the cloak-bag! You deserved all you have suffered, and what you have done is the cause of my destruction also." Whilst I uttered these words, I continued to ride back resolutely. Ascanio and the other earnestly entreated me that I would for the love of God endeavour

to save my life, as well as theirs, for that I was hurrying on to death. Just then I met Signor Cherubino and the Milanese, the former of whom reproved me for my vain fears, telling me that none of my people had been hurt, that Paolo's wound had only grazed the skin, and had not gone deep, and that the old postmaster lay dead upon the ground. He added that the sons had got themselves in readiness, and being assisted by several other persons, would certainly cut us all to pieces: "therefore, Benvenuto," continued he, "since fortune has saved us from their first fury, let us tempt her no more, for she will not save us twice." I then said: "Since you are satisfied, I am content;" so turning to Paolo and Ascanio, I bid them spur their horses hard, and gallop on to Staggia without ever once stopping, observing that when we were there we should be in safety. The wounded Milanese then said: "A plague of this unlucky adventure; this mischief was owing to a little soup which I ate yesterday, when I had nothing else for my dinner." Notwithstanding our great distress, we could not help laughing at the fool, and at his silly expressions. We clapped spurs to our horses and left Signor Cherubino and the Milanese, who were for riding on gently, to follow us at their leisure. In the meantime the sons of the deceased repaired to the Duke of Amalfi, and requested him to grant them a troop of light horse to pursue and take us. The duke, being informed that we belonged to the retinue of the Cardinal of Ferrara, would not grant their request.

In the meantime we arrived at Staggia, where we were in perfect security: upon our arrival we sent for the best surgeon that could be found in the place, who, examining Paolo's wound, declared that it was only skin deep, and there was no danger; we then ordered dinner to be got ready. Soon after, Signor Cherubino made his appearance with the fool of a Milanese, who was constantly exclaiming, "A plague of all quarrels and disputes!" adding that he had incurred excommunication,

because he had not had time to say his paternoster that blessed morning. This man was hard-favoured, and had naturally an ugly, wide mouth, but by the wound he had received it was enlarged above three inches. These circumstances, with his ludicrous Milanese jargon, and his foolish sayings, made us so merry that instead of lamenting our ill-fortune we could not help laughing at every word he uttered. As the surgeon wanted to sew the wound in his mouth, and had already made three stitches in it, he desired him to stop, telling him he would not upon any account have him sew it up entirely. He then took up a spoon, and desired it might be left so far open as to leave room for such a spoon to enter, that he might return alive to his companions. These words, which he uttered with many nods and ludicrous gestures, made us so merry that instead of bewailing our ill fortune we never ceased laughing, and in this manner continued our journey to Florence.

We dismounted at the house of my poor sister, where we were most kindly received, and very much caressed by her and my brother-in-law. Signor Cherubino and the Milanese went where their respective affairs called them: we stayed four days at Florence, during which Paolo was cured. The most diverting circumstance was, that whenever the fool of a Milanese became the subject of discourse, we all laughed as heartily as we lamented our other misfortunes, insomuch that we were constantly laughing and crying in the same breath.

CHAPTER XXVIII

After we had stayed four days at Florence, we took the road to Ferrara, and there found the cardinal, who having heard all the accidents that had befallen us, said with concern: "God grant that I may carry you alive to the

king, according to my promise to his Majesty!" The cardinal assigned me an apartment in a palace of his at Ferrara, a magnificent building, called Belfiore, contiguous to the walls of the city; and there he caused tools and all things necessary to be provided for me, that I might work at my business. He then ordered his retinue to set out for France without me, and seeing me very melancholy at being left behind, he said to me: "Benvenuto, all I do is for your good; for before you leave Italy I should be glad you were upon a certainty with regard to your employment in France. In the meantime proceed as fast as you can with the basin and the little cup; and I will leave orders with my steward to supply you with whatever money you may want."

Upon his departure I remained highly dissatisfied, and often thought of leaving the place: the only consideration that prevented me was my being then out of the power of Pope Paul; for in all other respects I was highly discontented, and very much a sufferer. I however assumed those sentiments of gratitude which the favour seemed to deserve, endeavouring to wait with patience and see how this adventure would end. I fell therefore hard to work with my two apprentices, and went surprisingly forward with my basin and cup. In the part of the city where we lodged the air was rather unwholesome, and on the arrival of summer we were all somewhat indisposed. During this our indisposition we made a discovery of a great waste, about a mile in extent, that belonged to the palace in which we lived, and where several pea-hens came like wild fowl to hatch their eggs. When I perceived this I charged my piece with powder, and lying in wait for the young peacocks, I every day killed one of them, which served us plentifully to live upon; and such was the effect of this food that it entirely cured our disorder. Thus we continued our work with alacrity for several months that we had to stay, and went forward with the basin and the cup—works that required considerable application.

About this time the Duke of Ferrara accommodated his differences with Pope Paul, relative to Modena and some other cities; and as the claims of the Church were just, the duke made this peace by dint of money: the sum given upon the occasion was considerable, and I think it exceeded three hundred thousand ducats. The duke had at that time an old treasurer, who had been brought up at the court of the duke his father, and whose name was Signor Girolamo Gigliolo: this old man could not bear that so great a sum should be given to the pope, so that he ran about the streets crying out aloud: "Duke Alphonso, our present duke's father, would rather have taken Rome with his money than have given it to the pope;" and he would obey no order for paying it. The duke having, however, at last forced him to pay the money, the old man was attacked with a flux so violent that it brought him almost to the brink of the grave. Whilst he lay ill, the duke sent for me and desired me to take his likeness; I accordingly drew his portrait upon a round black stone, about the size of a little dish. The duke was greatly pleased with my performance, and with some agreeable conversations which passed between us: the consequence was that he generally stayed at least four or five hours a day to have his likeness taken, and sometimes he made me sup with him at his own table. In a week's time I finished this portrait: he then ordered me to make a reverse; the design of it was a female figure that represented peace holding in her hand a small torch, with which she set fire to a trophy of arms. This female figure I represented in a joyous attitude, with garments of the thinnest sort, which flowed with the utmost grace; under her I designed a fury in despair, and bound with heavy chains. In this work I exerted the utmost efforts of my art, and it gained me great honour: the duke repeatedly expressed the highest satisfaction at my performance, and gave me the inscription for the head of his excellency as well as for the reverse.

The words intended for the reverse were "*Pretiosa in conspectu Domini:*" this intimated that the peace had been dearly purchased for a large sum of money.

Whilst I was busy about this reverse, the cardinal wrote to me to get ready, for the king insisted upon my coming directly, and that the next time I heard from him I should receive an order for all he had promised me. I caused my basin and cup to be packed up, having before shown them to the duke. A gentleman of Ferrara, Signor Alberto Bendidio, was agent to the cardinal: this person had remained twelve years without ever stirring out of his house, on account of a lingering disorder. He one day sent for me in a great hurry, and said that I must that instant take post, and use the utmost expedition to wait upon the king, who had inquired for me with the greatest eagerness and solicitude, thinking I was in France. The cardinal, to excuse himself, had told the monarch that I had stopped at an abbey of his at Lyons, being somewhat indisposed, but that he would take care I should be shortly with his Majesty: therefore I must take post and repair to the court of France with all speed. This Signor Alberto was a very worthy man, but haughty, and his disorder rendered his pride and humour insupportable: he told me that I must without delay prepare to ride post. I made answer that it was not customary with men of my calling to ride post; but that if I were to proceed to the court of France I should choose to go by easy stages, and to carry with me Ascanio and Paolo, my companions and artificers, whom I had brought from Rome; adding that there must likewise be a servant with us on horseback to attend us, and that I expected to be supplied with a sum sufficient to defray the charges of the journey. The infirm old man then proudly made answer, that "the duke's sons travelled in the very manner I had described." I instantly replied "that the sons of the art which I professed travelled in the manner I had mentioned; and that as I had never been the son of a duke I did not know how

such gentry appeared on their journeys; therefore I would not go to France at all, as well because the cardinal had broken the promise he had made me as that I had now received such insulting language." I then formed a resolution to have no more dealings with the people of Ferrara, and turning my back on him, I departed, murmuring my discontent, whilst he continued to bully and insult me.

After this, I waited on the duke with his medal finished: his reception of me was the kindest imaginable, and no man was ever more caressed by a prince. He had given orders to Signor Girolamo Gigliolo, who was then recovered, to look out for a diamond ring worth above two hundred crowns as the reward of my labour, and put it into the hands of Fraschino, one of the gentlemen of his bedchamber, who was to give it to me: these orders were obeyed. Fraschino, on the same evening that I had given him the medal, put a ring into my hands, with a diamond set in it, which made a great show, and told me from the duke that my masterly hand, which had acquitted itself so admirably in consecrating the memory of his excellency, well deserved to be adorned with such a diamond. The day following I examined the ring, the diamond of which was an inconsiderable one, not worth above ten crowns; and as I could not conceive that the duke could use such grand expressions in giving so trifling a reward, or that he imagined he had properly recompensed me, I took it for granted that the rogue of a treasurer had played me a trick. I therefore gave the ring to a friend, desiring him to contrive some way or other to return it to Fraschino, the gentleman of the bedchamber. This friend was Bernardo Saliti, who performed the commission admirably. Fraschino immediately came to me, and made a terrible stir, telling me that if the duke should discover that I had been so rude as to return a present which he had made me in so kind and gracious a manner, he would certainly resent it, and I might very possibly repent my

having taken so indiscreet a step. To this I answered that the ring which his excellency had sent me was not worth above ten crowns, and the work which I had done for him came to above two hundred; but to show his excellency that it was his favour alone I set a value upon, he might send me one of those English crab-rings, which are worth only tenpence, and I would keep it in remembrance of him as long as I lived; at the same time retaining in mind those honourable expressions of his excellency concerning my genius and abilities; for I considered my labour as abundantly rewarded by the honour of having served so great a prince, whereas a jewel of so little value disgraced me. These words occasioned the duke so much displeasure that he sent for his treasurer, and reproved him most severely: he at the same time sent me orders not to leave Ferrara without apprising him of my departure, and commanded his treasurer to give me a diamond worth three hundred crowns. The avaricious treasurer found one, the value of which was not above sixty crowns, and maintained that it was worth considerably more than two hundred.

In the meantime Signor Alberto had taken the right method of proceeding, and furnished me with all I had desired for my journey. I had resolved by all means to quit Ferrara directly, but the duke's careful chamberlain had so concerted matters with Signor Benedetto that I could not that day provide myself with horses. I had loaded a mule with my baggage, and with it I packed up the basin and the cup which I had made for the cardinal. Just at this juncture came in a gentleman of Ferrara, whose name was Signor Alfonso de' Trotti: he was advanced in years, exceedingly affable, and delighted greatly in talents and genius; but at the same time he was one of those that are very hard to be pleased, and who, if they happen to see anything which strikes them, represent it to their imaginations as so admirable, so divine, that they never expect again to see anything

equal to it. Signor Alfonso, as I before observed, happening to enter the room just at this time, Alberto said to him: "It happens unluckily that you are come too late, for the cup and basin that we are sending to France to the cardinal are now packed up." Alfonso hearing this, said he did not care; and upon beckoning to his servant, the latter went to his house, and brought from thence a white bowl, made of clay, from Faenza, the workmanship of which was admirable. Whilst the servant was going on his errand, Alfonso said to Alberto: "I will tell you why I have no longer any curiosity to see cups or vessels of any other sort. I once beheld an antique silver cup of such extraordinary beauty, that human imagination is incapable of forming an adequate idea of its excellence. Since that time I am indifferent about seeing anything else of the same kind, lest it should destroy the idea that I had formed in my imagination. It was in the possession of a person of condition, of great taste, who happening to go to Rome about some business, this antique cup was shown him secretly, and he by dint of money having corrupted the person who had the custody of it, brought it away with him; but he takes care to keep it from the knowledge of the duke, for he is afraid he should be deprived of it if his excellency should once come to know of his being possessed of so valuable a treasure." Whilst Alfonso was telling this long story, he never once took notice of me, though I was present all the time. In the meanwhile this fine earthen model made its appearance, and was displayed with such pomp and ostentation that I no sooner set my eyes upon it than I turned to Alberto and said: "I am happy in having seen this great curiosity." Alfonso then answered me with great contempt: "Who are you? You seem not to know what you are saying." To this I replied: "Listen to me, and you will see which of us knows best what he is saying." Then turning to Signor Alberto, who was a man of great gravity and uncommon genius, I spoke thus: "This is copied

from a little silver cup of such a weight, which I made at such a time for that mountebank Jacopo, a surgeon of Carpi, who came to Rome, stayed there six months, and by means of a quack medicine took in several noblemen and poor gentlemen, whom he defrauded of many thousands of ducats: at that time I made this cup for him, and another of a different sort, and he paid me very ill both for the one and the other. At present all the unfortunate gentlemen who used his nostrum are at Rome, crippled, and in a most wretched condition. It is a great honour to me that my works have acquired so high a degree of reputation amongst men of fortune like you; but I must tell you that for many years past I have laboured with the utmost assiduity to learn and improve; so that I cannot but be of opinion that the cup which I am carrying to France will prove much more worthy of the cardinal and the king than the other did of the quack doctor." As soon as I had delivered myself to this effect, Alfonso appeared to be in the utmost impatience to see the basin and cup, and I persisted in refusing to gratify his curiosity. This contest having lasted for some time between us, he declared that he would go to his excellency, and by his means contrive to get a sight of it. Thereupon Alberto Bendidio, who, as I have already observed, was a very proud, haughty man, said: "Before you leave this place, Signor Alfonso, you shall see it without being under the necessity of making any application to the duke." I quitted the room, and left Ascanio and Paolo to show it to them: they afterwards told me that the gentlemen had paid me a great many compliments, and spoke highly in my favour. Signor Alfonso then expressed a desire of contracting an intimacy with me, so that I began to grow quite impatient to leave Ferrara.

The only valuable or useful acquaintance I made there, were Cardinal Salviati and the Cardinal of Ravenna, with some of the eminent musicians; for the gentry of Ferrara are not only exceedingly avaricious,

but rapacious after the property of others, and endeavour to get possession of it by every expedient they can think of: this is the general character of them all. About six o'clock Fraschino came and delivered me the diamond, which was worth above sixty crowns; desiring me with a melancholy countenance, and in few words, to wear it for his excellency's sake. I answered that I should do so. I then mounted my horse and set out upon my journey, trusting myself to Providence. The treasurer took notice of all my gestures and words, and gave information thereof to the duke, who seemed to be incensed with what he heard to the highest degree, and was very near ordering me to be brought back.

Before night I had travelled above ten miles, trotting all the way, and upon finding myself the day following out of the district of Ferrara I was highly rejoiced; for I had never met with anything good in that country, except the peacocks, by which I had recovered my health. We steered our course by Mount Cenis, taking particular care to keep clear of Milan on account of the suspicion above mentioned, and soon after I arrived safe and in health at Lyons with Paolo, Ascanio, and a servant; we were four in all, pretty well mounted. Upon our arrival at Lyons we stopped for several days to wait the coming of the muleteer, who was charged with the silver basin and the cup, as likewise with part of my baggage; we were lodged in an abbey belonging to the cardinal. The muleteer being arrived, we packed up everything belonging to us very safe in a small cart, and in this manner continued our journey to Paris; by the way we met with some little impediments, which were not of much consequence.

CHAPTER XXIX

We found the court of the French monarch at Fontainebleau, where we directly waited on the cardinal, who caused apartments to be assigned us: we spent the night very agreeably, and were well accommodated. The next day the waggon came up, so we took out what belonged to us, and the cardinal having informed the king of our arrival, he expressed a desire to see me directly. I waited on his Majesty accordingly, with the cup and basin so often mentioned; being come into his presence I kissed his knee, and he received me in the most gracious manner imaginable. I then returned his Majesty thanks for having procured me my liberty, observing that every good and just prince like his Majesty was bound to protect all men eminent for any talent, especially such as were innocent like myself; and that such meritorious actions were set down in the books of the Almighty before any other virtuous deeds whatever. The good king listened to me till I had made an end of my speech, and expressed my gratitude in terms worthy of so great a monarch. When I had done, he took the cup and the basin and said: "It is my real opinion that the ancients were never capable of working in so exquisite a taste. I have seen all the masterpieces of the greatest artists of Italy, but never before beheld anything that gave me such high satisfaction." This the king said in French to the Cardinal of Ferrara, at the same time paying me several other compliments greater even than this. He then turned about and said to me in Italian: "Benvenuto, indulge yourself and take your pleasure for a few days; in the meantime I shall think of putting you into a way of making some curious piece of work for me." The Cardinal of Ferrara soon perceived that his Majesty was highly pleased with my arrival, and that the specimens

he had seen of my abilities had excited in him an inclination to employ me in other works of greater importance.

Whilst we followed the court, we may justly be said to have been in great straits, and the reason is that the king travels with upwards of twelve thousand horses, his retinue in time of peace being eighteen thousand. We sometimes danced attendance in places where there were hardly two houses, were often under the necessity of pitching very inconvenient tents, and lived like gypsies. I frequently solicited the cardinal to put the king in mind of employing me: he made answer that it was best his Majesty should think of it himself, advising me to appear sometimes in his presence, when he was at table. This advice I followed, and the king one day called me to him whilst he was at dinner. He told me in Italian that he proposed I should undertake some pieces of great importance; that he would soon let me know where I was to work, and provide me with tools and all things necessary; at the same time he conversed with me in a free, easy manner, on a variety of different subjects.

The Cardinal of Ferrara was present, for he almost always dined with the king: the conversation being over, his Majesty rose from table, and the cardinal said in my favour, as I was informed afterwards: "May it please your Majesty, this Benvenuto has a great desire to be at work, and it would be a pity to let such a genius lose his time." The king answered that he was very right, and desired him to settle with me all that concerned my subsistence. The cardinal, who had received the commission in the morning, sent for me that night after supper, and told me from the king that his Majesty had resolved I should immediately begin to work; but that he desired first to know my terms. To this the cardinal added: "It is my opinion that if his Majesty allows you a salary of three hundred crowns a year, it will be abundantly sufficient. Next I must request it of you, that you would leave the whole management of the affair to me, for every day I have

opportunities of doing good in this great kingdom, and I shall be always ready to assist you to the best of my power." I answered: "Without my ever soliciting your reverence, you promised upon leaving me behind you in Ferrara, never to let me quit Italy, or bring me into France without first apprising me upon what terms I was to be with his Majesty. But instead of acquainting me with the terms, you sent me express orders to ride post, as if riding post was my business. If you had then mentioned three hundred crowns as a salary, I should not have thought it worth my while to stir for double the sum. I notwithstanding return thanks to Heaven and to your reverence, since God has made you the instrument of so great a blessing as my deliverance from a long imprisonment. I therefore declare that all the hurt you can do me is not equal to a thousandth part of the great blessing for which I am indebted to you. I thank you with all my heart, and take my leave of you; and in whatever part of the world I shall abide, I shall always pray for your reverence." The cardinal then said in a passion: "Go wherever you think proper, for it is impossible to serve any man against his will." Some of his niggardly followers then said: "This man must have high opinion of his merit, since he refuses three hundred crowns:" others amongst the connoisseurs replied: "The king will never find another artist equal to this man, and yet the cardinal is for abating his demands as he would bargain for a faggot of wood." It was Signor Luigi Alamanni that said this, the same who at Rome gave the model of the salt-cellar, a person of great accomplishments, and a favourer of men of genius. I was afterwards informed that he had expressed himself in this manner before several of the noblemen and courtiers. This happened at a castle in Dauphiny, the name of which I cannot recollect; but there we lodged that evening.

Having left the cardinal, I repaired to my lodging, for we always took up our quarters at some place not far from the court, but this was three miles distant. I was accom-

panied by a secretary of the Cardinal of Ferrara, who happened to be quartered in the same place. By the way, this secretary, with a troublesome and impertinent curiosity, was continually asking me what I intended to do with myself when I got home, and what salary I had expected. I, who was half angry, half grieved, and highly provoked at having taken a journey to France, and being afterwards offered no more than three hundred crowns a year, never once returned him any answer: I said nothing more to him than that I knew all. Upon my arrival at our quarters, I found Paolo and Ascanio, who were waiting for me. I appeared to be in great disorder, and they knowing my temper, forced me to tell them what had happened. Seeing the poor young men terribly frightened, I said to them: "To-morrow morning I will give you money enough to bear your charges home, for I propose going by myself about some business of importance; it is an affair that I have long revolved in my mind, and there is no occasion for your knowing it."

Our apartment was next to that of the secretary, and it seems very probable that he acquainted the cardinal with all that I intended, and was firmly resolved to do; though I could never discover whether he did or not. I lay restless the whole night, and was in the utmost impatience for the approach of day, in order to put my design in execution. As soon as morning dawned, I ordered my horses should be in readiness, and having got myself ready likewise, I gave the young men all that I had brought with me, with fifty gold ducats over, and kept as many for myself, together with the diamond, which the duke had made me a present of; taking with me only two shirts, and some very indifferent clothes to travel in, which I had upon my back. But I could not get rid of the two young men, who were bent upon going with me by all means. I did my utmost to dissuade them, and said, "One of you has only the first down upon his cheeks, and the other has not even that; I have

instructed you to the utmost of my poor abilities, insomûch that you are become the two most expert young men in your way in Italy. Are you not then ashamed that you cannot contrive to help yourselves, but must be always in leading-strings? This is a sad affair, and if I were to dismiss you without money, what would you say? Be gone directly, and may God give you a thousand blessings! so farewell."

I thereupon turned my horse about, and left them both bathed in tears. I took a delightful path through a wood, intending to ride at least forty miles that same day, to the most remote corner I could possibly reach. I had already ridden about two miles, and in the little way I had gone formed a resolution to work at no place where I was known, nor did I ever intend to work upon any other figure but a Christ, about three cubits high, willing to make as near an approach as possible to that extraordinary beauty which He had so often displayed to me in visions. Having now settled everything in my own mind, I bent my course towards the Holy Sepulchre, thinking I was now got to such a distance that nobody could overtake me.

Just at this time I found myself pursued by some horsemen, which occasioned me some apprehensions, for I had been informed that these parts were infested by numbers of freebooters, called *Venturieri*, who rob and murder passengers, and who, though many of them are hanged almost every day, do not seem to be in the least intimidated. Upon the near approach of the horsemen, I perceived them to be one of the king's messengers accompanied by Ascanio. The former upon coming up to me said: "I command you, in the king's name, to repair to him directly." I answered: "You come from the Cardinal of Ferrara, for which reason I am resolved not to go with you." The man replied that since I would not go by fair means, he had authority to command the people to bind me hand and foot like a prisoner.

Ascanio at the same time did his utmost to persuade me to comply, reminding me that whenever the King of France caused a man to be imprisoned, it was generally five years before he consented to his release. The very name of a prison revived the idea of my confinement at Rome, and so terrified me that I instantly turned my horse the way the messenger directed, who never once ceased chattering in French till he had conducted me to court; sometimes he threatened me, sometimes he said one thing and sometimes another, by which I was almost vexed to death.

In our way to the king's quarters we passed before those of the Cardinal of Ferrara, who being at his door called me to him and said: "Our most Christian king has of his own accord assigned you the same salary that he allowed Leonardo da Vinci the painter, namely seven hundred crowns a year. He will pay you over and above for whatever you do for him: he likewise makes you a present of five hundred crowns for your journey; and it is his pleasure that they should be paid you before you stir from hence." When the cardinal ceased speaking, I answered that these indeed were offers worthy of so great a monarch. The messenger, who did not know who I was, seeing such great offers made me in the king's name, asked me a thousand pardons. Paolo and Ascanio said, "It is to God we owe this great good fortune."

The day following I went to return his Majesty thanks, who ordered me to make him models of twelve silver statues, which he intended should serve as candlesticks round his table. He desired they should be the figures of six gods and six goddesses, made exactly of his own height, which was very little less than three cubits. When he had given me this order he turned to his treasurer and asked him whether he had paid me five hundred crowns: the treasurer answered that he had heard nothing at all of the matter: at this the king was highly offended, as he had commanded the cardinal to speak

to him about it. He at the same time desired me to go to Paris, and look out for a proper house to work at my business, telling me I should have it directly. I received the five hundred gold crowns and repaired to Paris, to a house of the Cardinal of Ferrara's, where I began to work zealously, and made four little models two-thirds of a cubit high, in wax, of Jupiter, Juno, Apollo, and Vulcan.

At this juncture the king coming to Paris, I waited on his Majesty, and carried my models with me, as likewise the two young men, Ascanio and Paolo. When I perceived that the king was pleased with my performance, and had ordered me to make the silver Jupiter of the height above mentioned with all possible expedition, I informed his Majesty that I had brought these two young men with me from Italy for his service, and as they were my pupils, they were likely to be of much greater use to me, who had instructed them in the principles of my art, than any of the working artists of Paris. The king, in answer to this, desired me to settle on the two young men such a salary as should appear to me handsome and sufficient to support them. I then told him that a hundred gold crowns apiece would do, and I would take care that they earned their salary. So it was agreed. I then told the king that I had found a place very proper for carrying on my business. The place I meant belonged to his Majesty, and was called the Petit Nesle: it was then in the hands of the Provost of Paris, to whom his Majesty had granted it; but as the provost made no use of it, his Majesty might give me leave to work in it for his service. The king answered directly: "The place you mention is a house of mine; the person to whom I have granted it does not inhabit or make any sort of use of it: you may therefore take it for the purpose you mentioned." He thereupon ordered one of his officers to put me in immediate possession of the Nesle. The officer declined this at first, telling the king that it was not in his power to obey him. The king replied in a passion that he would

give things to whomsoever he thought proper, and to such men as were of use to him and served him; for with regard to the provost, he was of no use to him at all: he therefore desired to hear no more objections or demurs. The officer rejoined that it would be necessary to have recourse to violence. The king then said: "Go thither directly, and if a little force be not sufficient, you must exert yourself." The officer immediately conducted me to the place, and I was obliged to proceed to violence before I could take possession of it: he then bade me take care of myself, assuring me that my life was in imminent danger. I entered my new habitation, and immediately hired servants and purchased different weapons. My situation there was very uneasy during several days; for my adversary was a gentleman of Paris, and many other gentlemen were likewise my enemies, insomuch that I constantly received fresh insults. I must not omit that his Majesty took me into his service in the year of our Lord 1540, and I was then exactly forty years old.

When I found myself liable to these daily affronts, I again waited upon the king and requested him to place me somewhere else. The answer he made me was: "Who are you, and what is your name?" At so strange a reception I was quite disheartened, and could not possibly guess his Majesty's meaning: as I remained in silent astonishment, he repeated his question a second time. I then answered that my name was Benvenuto. The king said thereupon: "If you are that same Benvenuto that has been described to me, act like yourself: I give you free permission." I told his Majesty that it was sufficient for me to continue in his good graces, and then it was impossible for anything to hurt me. The king replied with a smile: "Go your ways, and depend upon it that my favour shall never be wanting."

Immediately upon this he ordered one of his secretaries, whose name was Mons. de Villeroy, to see me properly accommodated, and provided with everything necessary.

This Villeroy was an intimate friend of the Provost of Paris, in whose possession the place called Nesle had been for some time. It was a large old castle of a triangular form, contiguous to the walls of the city, but had no garrison. Mons. de Villeroy advised me to look out for some other building, and at all events to leave that, for as the person to whom Nesle had belonged was a man of great power, he would certainly get me assassinated. To this I made answer that "I was come from Italy to France from no other motive but to serve their great monarch; with regard to dying, I was sensible that death is the common fate of all men, and whether it happened a little sooner or a little later, was a matter of perfect indifference to me." This Villeroy was a man of excellent understanding, of most extraordinary qualifications and endowments, and exceedingly rich; he would have done anything to hurt me, but artfully concealed his malice; he had a grave deportment, a good aspect, and spoke deliberately. On this occasion he employed another gentleman, named Mons. de Marmande, who was treasurer of Languedoc. The first thing that this person did was to look out for the best apartments in the building, and get them fitted up for himself. I told him that the king had given me the place to work in for his Majesty, and that I was resolved it should be inhabited only by myself and my servants. Whereupon this man, who was proud and audacious, declared that he would do as he thought proper; that contending with him would be the same thing as running my head against a wall; and that he had Villeroy's authority for all he did. I then replied that I claimed the place by the king's authority, and that neither he nor Villeroy had any right to act in that manner. When I had expressed myself to this effect the haughty treasurer grossly abused me in French; whereupon I told him in my own language that he was a liar. At this he was incensed with rage, and by his gestures seemed just going to draw his hanger. I instantly clapped

my hand to a large cutlass, which I constantly wore by my side for my defence, and said to him: "If you offer to draw that hanger, I will instantly kill you." He had with him two servants, and I had my two apprentices. Whilst Mons. de Marmande remained thus in suspense, without determining upon anything and rather inclined to mischief than otherwise, he muttered to himself: "I will never put up with this treatment." As I saw that he had bad intentions, I determined directly what conduct to pursue, and said to Paolo and Ascanio: "As soon as you see me draw my cutlass fall upon those fellows and kill them if you can; for I will begin with destroying that villain, and then we shall make our escape with the assistance of God." When Mons. de Marmande perceived that I had formed this resolution, he thought himself happy in getting out of the place alive.

I wrote an account of all that had happened, in the most modest terms I could think of, to the Cardinal of Ferrara, who immediately acquainted the king with the whole transaction: his Majesty, highly provoked at this affair, put me under the care of another of his worthless courtiers, who was called Mons. d'Orbech. This gentleman provided me with everything necessary for my business, and that with the most complaisant officiousness.

CHAPTER XXX

As soon as I had made all the necessary preparations in my house and shop, in the most convenient and most creditable manner, I began to make three models exactly of the size that they were to be executed in silver: these were Jupiter, Vulcan, and Mars. I made them of clay well supported with iron, and then repaired to the king, who, as nearly as I can recollect, ordered I should have three hundred pounds of silver to enable me to begin my

work. Whilst I was making these preparations, the cup and the golden basin, which had been several months in hand, were finished: as soon as this was done, I got them well gilt. This appeared to be the finest piece of work that had ever been seen in France. I carried it directly to the Cardinal of Ferrara, who thanked me, and waited on the king to make him a present of it. His Majesty was highly pleased, and lavished greater praises upon me than had ever been before bestowed upon any artist. In return for this present he gave the Cardinal of Ferrara an abbey worth seven thousand crowns a year; at the same time he was for making me a present, but the cardinal prevented him, telling his Majesty it was too soon, as I had not yet finished any work for him. This confirmed the king, who was one of the most generous of men, in his resolution; and he said: "For that very reason I will encourage him to exert himself, and make something masterly for me." The cardinal in the utmost confusion replied: "Sire, I beg you would leave it to me, for I propose settling a pension of at least three hundred crowns a year upon him, as soon as I have taken possession of my abbey." These I never received; but I should tire the reader's patience if I were to relate all the diabolical tricks of that cardinal: I shall therefore proceed to subjects of greater consequence.

I returned to Paris, and being thus become a favourite of the king, I was universally admired. As soon as I received the silver which had been promised me, I began to work at the above-mentioned statue of Jupiter; and took into my service several journeymen. We worked day and night with the utmost assiduity, insomuch that having finished Jupiter, Vulcan, and Mars, in clay, and Jupiter being pretty forward in silver, my shop began to make a grand show. Just about this time the king made his appearance at Paris; and I went to pay my respects to him. When his Majesty saw me, he called to me in high spirits, and asked me whether I had anything curious

to show him at my shop, for he intended to call there. I told him of all I had done, and he expressed an earnest desire to see my performances. After dinner he made a party, consisting of Madame d'Estampes, the Cardinal of Lorraine, and some other great men (as the King of Navarre, brother-in-law to King Francis), and the queen his sister; the dauphin and dauphiness came likewise; in a word, that day all the nobility belonging to the court of France repaired to my shop.

I had just got home, and was beginning to work, when the king made his appearance at my castle gate: upon hearing the sound of so many hammers, he commanded his retinue to be silent. All my people were at work, so that the king came upon us quite unexpectedly. As he entered the saloon, the first object he perceived was myself, with a large piece of plate in my hand, which I had not yet placed, and which was to make the body of Jupiter; another was employed on the head, another again on the legs, so that the shop resounded with the beating of hammers. Whilst I was at work, as I had a little French boy in the shop, who had some way or other offended me, I gave him a kick which drove him above four cubits forward towards the door, so that when the king entered, the boy fell against him; the good monarch laughed heartily, and I was in the utmost confusion. His Majesty began to ask me what I was about, and expressed a desire that I should proceed with my work, telling me that he should be much better pleased if I would never harass myself with my business, but take as many men as I thought proper into my service, for it was his desire I should take care of my health, that I might be the longer able to serve him. I answered his Majesty that if I were to discontinue working I should not enjoy my health, and that my performances would then no longer be worthy of so great a prince. The king, thinking that I said this through vanity, and did not speak my real sentiments, ordered the Cardinal of Lorraine to repeat to

me what he had himself proposed; but I explained myself so fully to the cardinal that he acquiesced in my reasons, and advised his Majesty to let me act as I thought proper.

The king, when he had taken a sufficient view of my work, returned to his palace, after having conferred so many favours on me that it would he tedious to enumerate them. The day following he sent for me at dinner time: the Cardinal of Ferrara was present, and dined with him. I came just when they were at the second course: his Majesty immediately began to talk to me, saying that since he had so beautiful a cup and basin of my making, he must have a handsome salt-cellar to accompany such fine things; that he wanted me to draw a design of one, and the sooner the better. I answered that his Majesty should see such a design much sooner than he expected; for that whilst I was employed about the basin and the cup, I thought a salt-cellar would be a necessary companion to them, and therefore had already made one, which I should show to his Majesty in a few moments. The monarch turned about with great vivacity to the noblemen present, to the King of Navarre, the Cardinal of Lorraine, and the Cardinal of Ferrara, and said to them: "This is so obliging a man, that whoever has heard his character, would be desirous to know him:" he then told me he would be glad to see my design.

I went for it, and soon returned, for I had nothing to do but to cross the Seine: I brought with me a model of wax, which I had made at Rome at the request of the Cardinal of Ferrara. Upon showing it to the king, he expressed great surprise, and said: "This is a much finer design than I expected; it is a most noble production; such a genius should never be unemployed." He then turned to me, and said with great cheerfulness that he was highly pleased with my model, and should be glad to have a salt-cellar made according to it in gold. The

Cardinal of Ferrara winked at me, giving me to understand that he knew this to be the same model I had made for him in Rome. I thereupon repeated what I had before told him, that I had made it for one who would pay for it. The cardinal recollecting these words was nettled, and had a mind to take his revenge: he therefore thus addressed the king: "Sire, this is certainly a great undertaking: I have only one objection to make, namely, that I never expect to see it finished; for men of genius, who have noble and sublime ideas in their own art, are very ready to engage in grand enterprises, without duly considering when they can bring them to a conclusion; therefore, if I were to order works of such importance, I should be glad to know how soon they could be executed." The king made answer that he who was so anxiously solicitous about the finishing of works, would never begin any; and this he said in such a manner as intimated that he did not consider such undertakings as suitable to men of narrow minds. I then said: "When princes give their servants such noble encouragement, as your Majesty does both by words and deeds, they are sure of succeeding in all great undertakings; and since God has blessed me with so munificent a patron, I flatter myself that I shall be able to execute many great and admirable works for your Majesty."—"I do not doubt but you will," answered the king, rising from table. He sent for me to his apartment, and asked me how much gold the making of the salt-cellar would require. I immediately answered him, a thousand crowns. The king called for his treasurer, Viscount d'Orbech, and commanded him to give me directly a thousand old gold crowns, good weight.

I quitted his Majesty and sent for the two clerks, who had caused the money to be given me for the statue of Jupiter and many other things; and having crossed the Seine, I took with me a little basket, which I had from a nun, a cousin-german of mine, in a convent at Florence;

by good luck I took this basket, and not a wallet. I thought to do the business by day, as it was then early, and did not care to disturb my journeymen, nor did I even mind to take a servant with me. I came to the treasurer's house, who had the money ready before him, and had chosen the pieces according to the directions of the monarch. It appeared to me that the villain had recourse to all the little artifices and stratagems he could think of, to delay paying me the money till late at night. I was by no means wanting in diligence, but sent for some of my journeymen to come to me about business of the utmost consequence. When I found that they did not appear, I asked the messenger whether he had obeyed my orders: the scoundrel told me that he had, and that they answered him they could not come; but he would carry the money for me with pleasure: I replied that I chose to carry it myself. In the meantime the writing was drawn up, and the money being counted, I put it all into the basket, then thrust my arm through the two handles; as it entered with great difficulty, the money was well secured, and I carried it with much greater ease than if I had made use of a bag. I was armed with a coat of mail, and having my sword and dagger by my side, I set out directly for my own house. Just then I took notice of some of the servants who were whispering to one another: but they soon quitted the house, and seemed to turn down quite a different street from that which I had entered. I, being in great haste, passed the bridge of the Change, and went up by a little wall in the marshes, which carried me to my own house at Nesle.

When I was just at the Augustins, a very dangerous place, though within five hundred paces of my own house, where, if I had attempted to call out, my voice would not have been heard by anybody, I suddenly found four swords drawn against me. I quickly formed my resolution, and covering my basket with my cloak, I clapped my hand to my sword, and perceiving that they were

eager to surround me, I told them there was nothing to be won from a soldier but his cloak and sword: these I was resolved not to resign tamely, but to defend them at the risk of my life. Whilst I bravely opposed the villains, I several times opened my arms wide, that in case they had been set on by the servants who saw me receive the money, they might have some reason to think I could not have any such sum about me. The combat did not last long, for they began gradually to retire. Some of them said in French: "This Italian is a brave fellow; he certainly cannot be the person we wanted, and even if he be the man, he has no money about him." I spoke Italian, and dealt my blows with such dexterity that I was near killing some of them. As I appeared to be an excellent swordsman, they thought it most likely that I was a soldier; so they crowded close together, and gradually drew off from me, muttering all the while in their own language. I at the same time continued to say coolly, and without any sort of rhodomontade, that he who wanted to possess himself of my arms and cloak, must purchase them dearly. I began to mend my pace, and they followed me slowly; my fear thereupon increased, and I was filled with apprehensions of falling into an ambush of other villains who might surround me. But when I got within a hundred paces of my own house, I mended my pace as fast as I could, and cried out with a loud voice, "Help, help, or I am assassinated!" Immediately four of my young men sallied out with long pikes, and offered to pursue the fellows that had attacked me and were still in sight; but I stopped them, saying aloud, "Those four cowardly dogs have not been able to take from a single man a booty of a thousand gold crowns, the weight of which has almost broken his arm: let us therefore first go and lay them up, and then I will attend you with my great two-handed sword wherever you will." While we were putting up the money, the young men expressed great concern for the danger I had been exposed

to, and said to me in a reprimanding tone: "You have too much confidence in your own courage, which will bring you one day into some scrape, and make us all lament your unhappy fate." I had a long chat with them, and they told me that my adversaries were gone off; so we all supped cheerfully, and were very merry, making a jest of the various turns and changes of fortune, which, whether prosperous or adverse, can affect us but for a time. I own it is a common saying, that every reverse of fortune teaches us how to behave on another occasion; but that is not true, as the circumstances which attend each event are different, and such as could not be foreseen.

The next morning I began the great salt-cellar, and caused that and other works to be forwarded with the utmost expedition. I had by this time provided myself with several journeymen, as well for sculpture as for the goldsmith's business: these journeymen were Italians, French, and Germans, and sometimes I had a considerable number of them. When I happened to meet with able artificers (for I almost every day changed them, taking into my shop such as were most expert and skilful), I hurried them in such a manner, that, unable to bear the constant labour as I did, who had received a happy constitution from nature, they endeavoured to restore and keep up their spirits by eating and drinking. Some of the Germans, who were more skilful and experienced than the rest, strove to keep pace with me, but could not bear the fatigue; so that the attempt cost them their lives.

Whilst I went on with the silver statue of Jupiter, seeing that I had plenty of that metal, over and above what the statue required, I, without the king's knowledge, set about making a large silver vessel with two handles, about a cubit and a half high. I had likewise a fancy to cast in bronze the grand model which I had made for the silver Jupiter. I immediately began this arduous undertaking, which was of a nature that I had never attempted before; and having entered into a conversation

upon the subject with some of the old experienced artists of Paris, I mentioned to them all the methods used in Italy to bring such a work to bear. They told me that they had never made use of that process, but that if I would let them take their own way, they would cast me the model of bronze as fine and as exact as the earthen one. I chose to make a bargain upon employing them; and thinking their demand moderate, promised them several crowns more than they asked.

They set about the work, but I soon perceived that they did not take the right method; I therefore began a head of Julius Cæsar, the breast covered with armour, much bigger than the life, which I took from a little model I had brought with me from Rome, representing an antique head of admirable workmanship. I likewise began another head of the same size, which was the likeness of a fine girl of my acquaintance. I gave her the name of Fontainebleau, from the seat which the king had chosen for his favourite residence. Having made a proper furnace to melt the bronze, and arranged and baked our figures, they their Jupiter, and I my two heads, I said to them: "It is my opinion that your Jupiter will not come out, as you have not blown enough under it for the wind to play, so that you labour in vain." To this they answered that in case their work did not succeed they would return me the money and make good all my expenses; but they at the same time maintained that the fine heads, which I wanted to cast in the Italian manner, would never succeed according to my expectation. There were present at this dispute the treasurers and other gentlemen who came to me from the king, and who related to his Majesty all that was said and done upon the occasion. The two old artists, who proposed casting the model of Jupiter, occasioned some delay in the preparations for that purpose: they said they would gladly adjust the two moulds of my heads, it being impossible that they could succeed according to my process, and it

would be a thousand pities that two such fine pieces should be spoiled. As they had informed his Majesty of this, he desired they would endeavour to learn, and not take upon them to teach a person who was a master of the business.

They with great laughter and merriment put their work into the mould; and I, without any sort of emotion, without either laughing or discovering any uneasiness, put my two heads on each side of the figure of Jupiter. When our metal was thoroughly melted, we poured it out with great satisfaction; the mould of Jupiter was thereupon cleverly filled, as were likewise those of my two heads at the same time. The two old artists were highly rejoiced, while I was very well pleased with my success; in short, it was an equal triumph to us both that we had been mistaken with regard to our opinion of each other's performance. They then were in high spirits, and desired to drink, according to the French custom; which I granted, and readily entertained them with a collation. The next thing they asked me for was the money I had agreed to give them, and what I had promised them over and above. I answered: "You have been very merry, whereas I suspect you should have been sad; for I have taken it into consideration that there has been a greater consumption of metal upon this work than should have been, so that I am determined not to let you have any more money till to-morrow morning." The poor men began to reflect seriously on this speech of mine, and without making any answer returned home. When they came again in the morning, they without any stir began to take the figures out of the moulds; and because they could not get at their own great figure, without first taking out my two heads, they did so accordingly, and placed them in such a manner that they appeared to the utmost advantage. Soon after they set up so loud a cry that I thought it was a shout of joy, and immediately ran to the workshop from my own chamber, which was at a considerable distance.

I found them exactly in the attitude of those who guarded Christ's sepulchre, in sorrow and astonishment. I cast my eyes upon the two heads, and seeing that they made a very good appearance, I was partly pleased and partly vexed, while they excused themselves by saying: "We have been unfortunate." I answered: "You have been very fortunate, but you have shown little skill; if I had but instructed you with a single word, the figure would have come out admirably, which would have been greatly to my honour and your advantage; but as to my honour, I can easily find an excuse, you for your parts will gain neither honour nor profit: therefore another time learn to work, and not to banter and make sport of others."

They begged I would take compassion upon them, acknowledging that I was in the right, and that if I did not show them indulgence, in not obliging them to make good all that great expense, they must be reduced to beggary as well as their families. My answer was that should the king's treasurers compel them to pay what they had agreed, I would pay it for them, for I saw that they had done their best. By acting in this manner I greatly conciliated the good graces of the king's treasurers and ministers. A full account of the whole affair was given to his Majesty, who was so generous as to order that I should be satisfied in all my demands.

CHAPTER XXXI

Just at this time arrived at court the great Piero Strozzi, who having put the king in mind of his letters of naturalisation, his Majesty gave orders that they should be made out directly. He at the same time said: "Prepare letters of naturalisation for Benvenuto likewise, *mon ami*, carry them to his house, and let him pay no fee whatever." Those of the great Piero cost him several hundred ducats;

mine were brought me by one of the king's first secretaries, whose name was M. Anthony Masson. This gentleman put the letters into my hands with many expressions of kindness from the king, and said: "His Majesty makes you a present of these to encourage you to serve him with a greater zeal; they are letters of naturalisation." He at the same time told me that letters of the like nature had been granted on much solicitation, and as a great favour, to Piero Strozzi; but that the king gave me these of his own accord—a mark of distinction which had never been shown before to any foreigner in that kingdom. I returned my royal benefactor thanks with all possible demonstrations of gratitude, and requested the secretary to inform me what those letters of naturalisation meant. The secretary was a very polite, well-bred man, who spoke Italian incomparably well: he first laughed heartily, and then resuming his gravity, told me in my own language the meaning of letters of naturalisation; that it was the highest honour that could be conferred on a foreigner, and something of much greater consequence than being made a Venetian gentleman. Having quitted me and returned to the king, he related to his Majesty all that had passed between us; the monarch laughed a good while, and said: "He shall know presently why I sent him the letters of naturalisation. Go and make out his patent of lord of the Castle of Nesle, which is a part of my demesne: he will understand this much more easily than he did the letters of naturalisation." A messenger came to me from the king with the above patent, and I was for giving him a gratification, but he refused it, telling me that he had his Majesty's express orders to the contrary. The above-mentioned letters of naturalisation, together with those of the grant of the castle, I took with me, when I returned to Italy; and wherever I reside, or wherever I am to finish my days, I shall always endeavour to have them with me.

I now resume the thread of my narrative. Having

upon my hands the works of which I have already spoken, I mean the silver Jupiter, which was begun, the golden salt-cellar, the great silver vase, and the two heads of bronze, I proceeded with expedition, and gave orders to have a base cast for the statue of Jupiter. This I caused to be made very magnificently of bronze, enriched with a variety of ornaments, amongst which I carved in basso-rilievo, the Rape of Ganymede, and on the other side, Leda with her Swan; the latter I cast in bronze, and it had surprising success. I made another of the same sort, intending to place upon it the statue of Juno, expecting soon to begin that likewise, if the king furnished me with silver for such an undertaking. Continuing to work with the utmost assiduity, I had already completed the silver Jupiter, and had also cast the golden salt-cellar; the cup was very forward, and the two heads of bronze were finished. I had likewise executed several little pieces for the Cardinal of Ferrara, and moreover, a small silver vase of very rich workmanship, which I designed as a present to Madame d'Estampes. At the same time, I had done some works for several Italian noblemen, as for Signor Piero Strozzi, the Count d'Anguillara, the Count of Pitigliano, the Count of Mirandola, and many others.

When I was pretty forward with these works for my gracious monarch, he returned to Paris, and three days after came to my house, with a number of the chief nobility of his court. They all expressed great surprise at my being so forward with so many performances; and as Madame d'Estampes was with him, they began to talk of Fontainebleau. The lady advised his Majesty to order me to make some fine ornament for his favourite residence. The king instantly answered: "What you say is very just; I will presently determine upon something handsome for him to execute;" then turning to me he asked me what I thought would be a proper ornament for that charming fountain. I proposed some of my fancies; his Majesty likewise told his opinion; he mentioned, at the same time,

that he intended going to take his pleasure, for fifteen or twenty days, at St. Germain-en-Laye, which was twelve leagues distant from Paris, desiring that I would in the meanwhile make a model for his fountain at Fontainebleau, with the finest inventions I could think of, that being the most delightful place of recreation in his whole kingdom. He concluded with ordering me to exert my utmost efforts to produce something masterly; I promised to do my best. The king, seeing such a number of works so far advanced, said to Madame d'Estampes: "I never knew a man in his way that pleased me more, or that deserved to be more encouraged: we must endeavour to keep him here: he spends a great deal of money; is a good companion, and works hard. I am, indeed, under a necessity of thinking of him myself, for in all the times that he has been with me, or that I have been here, he has never asked for anything; his mind seems to be entirely taken up with his business. I must confer some favour on the man, for fear of losing him." Madame d'Estampes replied: "I will take care to put you in mind." They went away, and I proceeded with the utmost expedition in the works I had begun; at the same time I set about the model of the fountain, and used all despatch in bringing it to perfection.

In about six weeks the king returned to Paris, and I, who had worked night and day, waited on his Majesty with my model: the figures were so elegantly executed that it was a very easy matter to understand the design. The fatal disputes between the King of France and the emperor being already renewed, I found him very pensive; and therefore addressed myself to the Cardinal of Ferrara, telling him that I had brought some models which the king had employed me to make; and I requested him to take the first opportunity of mentioning them to his Majesty, as I was inclined to think they would afford him pleasure. The cardinal complied with my request, and spoke of the models to the king, who quickly repaired to the place where I kept them.

First of all I had designed the palace gate of Fontainebleau, and made as little alteration as possible in the form of it, which, according to the whimsical taste of the French, seemed to be an odd mixture of greatness and littleness; for its form was almost square, with a semicircle over it bent like the handle of a basket, in which the king was desirous of having a figure to represent Fontainebleau. I gave a beautiful proportion to the gate, and over it I put an exact semicircle, with some agreeable projections on each side: instead of two pillars, which the order of architecture seemed to require for their support, I placed two satyrs: one of these, something above half-relief, appeared to sustain with one arm that part of the pile which touched the columns; in the other it held a large massive club; the countenance was so stern and fierce as to strike terror into the beholders: the other satyr had the same attitude, but differed from the former in the head, and some other parts; it held in its hand a whip, with three balls fastened to certain chains. Though I call these figures satyrs, they had nothing in common with those sylvan gods but certain little horns and heads resembling that of a goat; in all other respects they were of the human form. In the semicircle I represented a female figure in a reclining attitude, with her left arm upon the neck of a hart, which was a device of the king's: on one side of her I designed, in half-relief, little goats, boars, and other wild beasts; and on the other, in stronger relief, greyhounds, and other dogs of different sorts, such as are to be seen in the delightful wood where the fountain rises. I drew the whole plan in an oblong form, and at each corner I designed a victory in basso-rilievo, holding little torches in their hands, as they are represented by the ancients. On the top I placed the figure of a salamander, the king's own emblem, with several other ornaments pleasing to the eye, and adapted to the nature of the work, which was of the Ionic order.

The sight of this model raised the king's spirits, and diverted him from that disagreeable conversation in which

he had been engaged above two hours. Finding him in this good humour, I showed him another model, which he little expected, for he imagined he had seen ingenuity enough in the first. This model was above two cubits in size: it represented a fountain in the form of a complete square, with fine steps round it, which intersected each other—a thing almost unexampled in any country whatever. In the midst of this fountain I placed a solid mass, which rose a little above its brim; upon this mass stood a naked figure of a most graceful shape. It had a broken lance in its right hand, raised aloft in the air, and the left it kept upon the handle of a scimitar, the form of which was exceeding beautiful. It rested upon the left foot and held the right upon the crest of a helmet, the workmanship of which was the richest and most elegant that could be conceived. At the four sides of the fountain I had designed a high raised figure, seated, with many ingenious devices and ornaments to each. The king began to interrogate me about the fancy of this elegant work, telling me that he had himself understood my whole plan of the gate, without asking a single question; but as for my present design, though it appeared to him exceedingly beautiful, he could not so much as form a conjecture concerning its meaning. He added that he was very sure I had not acted like some foolish artist, who produced works which had some beauty and elegance in them, but which were notwithstanding void of signification.

As I had had the good fortune to please his Majesty by my performance, I prepared to give him a second pleasure by my explanation of it, which was couched in the following words: "May it please your Majesty, this little work was designed on a small scale, but when it is carried into execution there will be the same symmetry and exactness in great as in miniature. That figure in the middle is of fifty-four feet." At this the king appeared to be greatly surprised. "Next," continued I, "is

represented the god Mars: those other four figures are made for the Virtues, in which your Majesty so highly delights, and which you so much favour. The figure upon the right hand is the emblem of Science: observe its symbol, that denotes philosophy with all its train of attendant virtues. That other signifies the art of designing, which comprises sculpture, painting, and architecture. That next figure represents Music, a proper companion for all the other sciences. This, which appears so kind and courteous, is intended for Liberality, since without her aid none of those virtues or talents given us by the Almighty can ever become conspicuous. The great statue in the middle represents your Majesty, who are the Mars of this age, the only valiant prince in the world, a prince who exerts that valour in supporting and asserting the glory of his crown."

Scarce had he the patience to hear me out, when he exclaimed aloud: "I have at last found a man after my own heart." He immediately sent for his treasurer, and ordered him to supply me with all I required, however great the expense. He then clapped me on the shoulder, and said to me in French: "*Mon ami*, I do not know which pleasure is the greatest, that of a prince who meets with a man after his own heart, or that of the artist who finds a prince that gives him all the encouragement necessary to carry his great and sublime ideas into execution." I made answer that if I was the artist meant by his Majesty the happiness was entirely on my side. He answered, laughing: "Let us then reckon it equal on both sides."

I left the monarch in high spirits and returned to my work. It happened unluckily for me that I had not been apprised to act the same farce with Madame d'Estampes, who having in the evening heard all that passed from the king himself, conceived so deep a resentment at the neglect that she said with the utmost indignation: "If Benvenuto had shown me his fine works I should have

had reason to remember him at the proper time." The king endeavoured to excuse me, but without success. Having received this information about a fortnight after, when the court, after making a tour through Normandy to Rouen and Dieppe, was returned to St. Germain-en-Laye, I took with me the fine piece of plate which I had wrought at the desire of Madame d'Estampes herself, in hopes that, by making her a present of it, I might recover her good graces. Accordingly I carried it to her, and having mentioned my intention to her waiting-woman, showed her the cup which I proposed presenting to her lady. She received me in the kindest manner imaginable, and said she would just speak a word to Madame d'Estampes, who was not yet dressed, but that as soon as ever she had apprised her of my coming she would introduce me. Upon acquainting her lady with my arrival, and the present I had brought, the latter answered disdainfully, "Tell him to wait." Having heard this, I armed myself with patience, and continued in suspense till she was going to dinner. Perceiving that it grew late, hunger provoked me to such a degree that unable to resist its cravings any longer, I gave the lady a hearty curse, and going directly to the Cardinal of Lorraine, made him a present of the cup, begging he would stand my friend with the king, and insure me from being deprived of his good graces. He made answer that I did not want a friend at court, and in case I had, he would have espoused my cause without being solicited; then calling to his steward, he whispered something in his ear.

The steward, having waited till I had quitted the cardinal's presence, said to me: "Benvenuto, come this way, and I will treat you with a bottle of good wine." As I was not well aware of his meaning, I made answer: "For God's sake, good Mr. steward, do but give me a single glass of wine, and a bit of bread, for I am ready to sink for want of sustenance. I have waited fasting since

the morning early at Madame d'Estampes' door, with an intention to make her a present of that fine gilt cup; and when I sent her word that I was there, she, to drive me to distraction, ordered me to be told to wait. At present hunger attacks me, and I find my powers begin to fail; so, as it was God's will, I have bestowed my property and my work on one that deserved it much better, and all I desire of you is to give me something to drink; as I am of a temper rather impatient, and hunger also pinches me to such a degree that I am almost ready to faint." Whilst I uttered these words with great difficulty, a servant brought in some excellent wine and other delicacies for a collation. I refreshed myself very well, and having recruited my spirits thoroughly, my peevishness and impatience subsided. The worthy steward having put into my hands a hundred gold crowns, I declined accepting them on any account. Upon this he went and told the cardinal, who reprimanded him very severely, and commanded him to force them upon me, or not appear again in his presence. The steward came back highly offended, declaring that the cardinal had never rated him so before: he then endeavoured to persuade me to accept of his master's bounty; and upon my making some resistance, he said in a passion that he would compel me to take the money. I at length accepted it, and proposed going to return the cardinal thanks; but he gave me to understand by one of his secretaries that whenever he had it in his power to befriend me he should do it with pleasure.

I returned to Paris the same evening: the king was informed of all that had passed, and Madame d'Estampes was very much rallied upon the occasion; but this only increased her resentment against me, whence my life was afterwards in danger, as the reader shall be informed in due time.

I should, however, first take notice of my having acquired the friendship of one of the most learned and

most amiable acquaintances that I ever had in my life. This was Signor Guido Guidi, an excellent physician, and eminent citizen of Florence. On account of the calamities in which adverse fortune had involved me, I deferred speaking to him before, but I thought that neglect excusable, as he was always next my heart. Having afterwards taken it into consideration that my life was never agreeable without him, I have inserted an account of him amidst that of my greatest crosses, that as he constantly comforted and assisted me, I may in this narrative dwell upon the remembrance of the happiness I enjoyed in his friendship. Signor Guido Guidi came to Paris while I resided in that capital. Upon our first acquaintance I conducted him to my castle, and assigned him an apartment in it, so that we enjoyed each other's company several years. Thither also came the Bishop of Pavia, Monsignor de Rossi, brother to the Count of St. Secondo. I made this prelate leave his inn, and took him with me to my castle, where I gave him an apartment, in which he was handsomely accommodated, with all his retinue, during several months. Upon another occasion I accommodated Signor Luigi Alamanni and his sons for some months; and the Almighty was so favourable to me as to put it into my power to serve some other persons of distinction, and men of genius.

I enjoyed the friendship of Signor Guido as many years as I resided at the castle, and we often boasted to each other that we had acquired some improvement in our respective professions at the expense of the great and munificent king who had invited us to his capital. I can say with truth, that if I have any reputation, or have ever produced works deserving of notice, it was owing to the encouragement of that generous monarch. I therefore resume the thread of my narrative concerning him, and the great works in which I was employed by his Majesty. My castle had a tennis-court, from which I derived great benefit; at the same time that I used it

for exercise there were many habitations in it, occupied by several men of different trades, amongst whom there was an excellent printer. Almost his whole shop was within the precincts of my castle, and it was he that first printed the excellent medical treatise published by Signor Guido. As I had occasion for the shop, I made him quit it, but not without some difficulty. There was likewise in the same place a person who made gunpowder: I wanted the habitation he occupied for some of my German artists, but the powder-maker would upon no account dislodge, though I several times civilly desired him to let me have the apartment, which was really necessary for some of my men employed in the king's service. The more humble my remonstrances, the more insolently the brute answered me. At last I allowed him three days to remove; but he laughed and told me that he would begin to think of it in about three years.

I did not know at first that this fellow was a domestic of Madame d'Estampes; and if it had not been that the above affair between that lady and myself had made me particularly cautious, I should instantly have dislodged him; but I thought it advisable to have patience for the three days: these being expired, I took with me several armed men, Germans, Italians, and French, as likewise some menial servants, who in a short time cleared the house, and threw all he had in it into the streets. I treated him with this particular rigour, because he had told me that he did not think any Italian had the courage to move the least thing belonging to him out of its place. In consequence of his having made such a boast I behaved to him in that manner; and then said to him, "I am the least of all the Italians, but I have done nothing to you yet, in comparison of what I find myself disposed to do, and what I certainly shall perform, if you speak another word," with many more angry and menacing expressions. The man, in the utmost terror and astonishment, gathered up his effects as well as he could, and ran to Madame

d'Estampes, to whom he gave a most terrible account of the whole transaction. That grand enemy of mine, an enemy the more dangerous in proportion to her greater influence and credit, represented the affair in the worst light to his Majesty. The monarch, as I have been informed, flew into a violent passion, and was upon the point of giving very severe orders against me; but as his son Henry the dauphin, now King of France, had received many affronts from that presumptuous lady, which had been also the case of the Queen of Navarre, sister to King Francis, they both espoused my cause so warmly that the king turned the whole affair into ridicule; so that with the assistance of the Almighty I had a fair escape at this critical juncture.

CHAPTER XXXII

After I had thus got rid of my Frenchman, I found myself obliged to proceed in the same manner with another tradesman, but did not demolish the house; I only caused the goods to be thrown out of the window. This provoked Madame d'Estampes so highly that she said to the king: "I believe this outrageous fellow will one day ransack the city of Paris." The king answered, in a passion, that I did very right in ridding myself of a rabble which would have prevented me from executing his orders. The fury of this cruel woman rising every day to a higher pitch, she sent for a certain painter, who lived occasionally at Fontainebleau, the king's place of residence. This painter was an Italian, and a native of Bologna, by which name he was universally known; but his real name was Francesco Primaticcio. Madame d'Estampes bade him apply to the king for the work which he had resolved to put into my hands, and said she would second him to the utmost of her power: this was agreed upon between them.

Bologna was highly rejoiced, looking upon himself as sure of success, though the business was quite out of the sphere of his profession. But as he was master of the art of designing, and had agreed with certain workmen who had learned their business under Rosso, our celebrated painter of Florence, who must be acknowledged to have been a man of great genius; and as Primaticcio himself, in whatever he had produced of any degree of merit, had followed the excellent manner of that Rosso, who was at this time no more; these very plausible reasons had such weight, being backed by Madame d'Estampes, and conspiring with the continual dinning in the king's ears day and night, either by Primaticcio or the lady, that this great prince at last began to listen to their suggestions.

They said to him: "How is it possible that your sacred Majesty, while employing Benvenuto to make you twelve statues of silver, of which he has not yet finished one, can think of engaging him in so great an undertaking? You must resolve to give up the other plans which you are so much bent upon, because a hundred men of first-rate talents would be unable to finish all the great works which this one enterprising genius has taken in hand. It is obvious, at the same time, that he exerts himself too much, and is indefatigable in the business, which may very probably be the cause of your losing both him and the works he is employed in." These and many other arguments of the like sort, by being urged at a proper time, produced their effect upon the mind of the king, so that he complied with their desires; and yet he had not hitherto seen any designs or models by Primaticcio.

Just at this very juncture, the second person whom I had driven out of the precincts of my castle, had commenced a lawsuit against me at Paris, affirming that I had robbed him of several of his effects at the time that I dislodged him. This suit occasioned me a great deal of trouble, and took up so much of my time that I was frequently upon the point of forming a desperate resolution

to quit the kingdom. It is customary in France to make the most of a suit which they commence with a foreigner, or with any other person who is not used to law transactions; as soon as they have any advantage in the process, they find means to sell it to certain persons who make a trade of buying lawsuits. There is another villainous practice which is general with the Normans, I mean that of bearing false witness; so that those who purchase the suit immediately instruct five or six of these witnesses, as there happens to be occasion: by such means, if their adversary cannot produce an equal number to contradict and destroy their evidence, and happens to be ignorant of the custom of the country, he is sure to have a decree given against him. Both these accidents having happened to me, I thought the proceeding highly dishonourable. I therefore made my appearance in the great hall of the Palais at Paris in order to plead my own cause; where I saw the king's lieutenant for civil affairs, seated upon a grand tribunal. This man was tall, corpulent, and had a most austere countenance: on one side he was surrounded by a multitude of people; and on the other with numbers of attorneys and counsellors, all ranged in order upon the right and left; others came one by one, and severally opened their causes before the judge. I observed that the counsellors, who stood on one side, sometimes spoke all together. To my great surprise, this extraordinary magistrate, with the true countenance of a Pluto, seemed by his attitude to listen now to one, now to another, and constantly answered with the utmost propriety. As I always took great pleasure in seeing and contemplating the efforts of genius, of what nature soever, this appeared to me so wonderful that I would not have missed seeing it for any consideration. As the hall was of a prodigious extent, and filled with a great multitude of persons, particular care was taken that none should enter but such as came about business; so the door was kept locked, and the avenues were guarded by door-

keepers; these men, in opposing those who were for forcing in, sometimes made such a noise that the judge reprimanded them very severely. I chanced several times to observe what passed; the words which I heard the judge utter, upon seeing two gentlemen who wanted to hear the trial, and whom the porter was endeavouring to keep out, were these: "Be quiet, be quiet, Satan, get hence, and leave off disturbing us." The terms in French were, *Paix, paix, Satan, allez, paix.* As I had by this time thoroughly learnt the French language, upon hearing these words I recollected what Dante said, when he with his master, Virgil, entered the gates of hell; for Dante and Giotto, the painter, were together in France, and visited Paris with particular attention, where the court of justice may be considered as hell. Hence it is that Dante, who was likewise perfect master of the French, made use of that expression; and I have often been surprised that it was never understood in that sense; so that I cannot help thinking that the commentators on this author have often made him say things which he never so much as dreamed of.

To return to my suit: I found that when verdicts were given against me, and there was no redress to be expected from the law, I must have recourse to a long sword, which I had by me, for I was always particularly careful to be provided with good arms. The first that I attacked was the person who commenced that unjust and vexatious suit; and one evening I gave him so many wounds upon the legs and arms, taking care, however, not to kill him, that I deprived him of the use of both his legs. I then fell upon the other, who had bought the cause, and treated him in such a manner as quickly caused a stop to be put to the proceedings: for this and every other success I returned thanks to the Supreme Being, and began to conceive hopes that I should be for some time unmolested. I earnestly entreated my young journeymen, especially the Italians, to be attentive to their business, and to work hard for a time,

till I could finish the works I had undertaken; for I proposed to return to Italy as soon as ever they were completed, not being able any longer to bear the villainy of the French; at the same time seriously considering that if the monarch should once happen to be angry with me, I might probably meet with severe treatment for having revenged myself in the manner I had done.

These Italian journeymen were as follow:—The first and highest in my favour was Ascanio, born in the kingdom of Naples, at a place called Tagliacozzo; the second was Paolo, a Roman, a person of mean birth, who did not so much as know his own father; these two I had brought from Rome, where they had lived with me. The third was likewise a Roman, who came from Italy, on purpose to enter into my service; his name was also Paolo, and he was son to a poor Roman gentleman of the Macaroni family. This young man had made but little proficiency in the business; but he was brave, and an excellent swordsman. The fourth journeyman was a native of Ferrara, whose name was Bartolomeo Chioccia. The fifth was a Florentine named Paolo Micceri, who had a brother, surnamed Gatta, a very able clerk, but guilty of extravagance when he managed the business for Tommaso Guadagni, a rich merchant; he afterwards kept my books, which contained my accounts with his most Christian Majesty, and others by whom I was employed. Paolo Micceri, having learnt his brother's method of book-keeping, continued to follow it, and I allowed him a good salary; he appeared to me to be a very pious youth, and discovered a great turn to devotion, sometimes singing psalms, sometimes telling his beads, so that I conceived great hopes from such an appearance of virtue. I therefore called him aside, and spoke to him thus: "My dear friend Paolo, you see how happily you are settled with me, and may remember you were before out of business; you are a Florentine, which makes me confide in you; and what gives me high satisfaction is to see you so devout, and so regular in all acts of

religion. I therefore, putting more trust in you than in the others, make it my request to you that you would give your attention to two things, in which I am in a particular manner concerned: one is, that you would carefully watch over my property, and be always upon your guard to prevent anybody from meddling with it, as likewise that you avoid touching it yourself. At the same time you see the poor girl Caterina, whom I keep in the house chiefly on account of my business, and without whom it would be impossible for me to conduct it. Now I have particular reasons for wishing that she should be extremely circumspect in her conduct; therefore I desire you to watch her attentively, and inform me of any improprieties you may observe. I have no desire to provide for other people's children, nor would I tamely put up with such a thing. Were I to detect so scandalous an outrage, I would sacrifice both to my insulted honour. Therefore be prudent, and obey my injunctions; let me know if you observe anything wrong, and I will dismiss both her and her mother with disgrace." This traitor crossed himself from head to foot; and made the most solemn asseverations that such an idea as that of injuring so great a benefactor in the smallest particular could never enter his mind. His appeals to all that was sacred and apparent devotion to me, completely imposed upon me. Two days afterwards my countryman, Matteo del Nazaro, invited me and all my establishment to partake of his hospitality at his country house. When I proposed to take Paolo with me to enjoy himself, he observed how dangerous it would be to leave the house unprotected, and such gold, silver, and jewels lying all about; and that there were thieves on the look-out day and night. "Go, then, and enjoy yourself, dear master," he added, "and I will keep watch." So taking Ascanio and Chioccia with me, I set out and spent the greater part of the day with infinite satisfaction. But towards evening I began to feel uncomfortable, and out of humour; the words used by Paolo kept recurring to my mind; I could

not master my uneasiness, and at last I took horse, and with two of my attendants, returned to my castle. I had very nearly taken the villain by surprise; for as I entered the court I heard the wretch of a mother crying: "Paolo, Caterina; here is the master." Soon they both appeared, terror and confusion depicted in every feature, scarcely knowing what they said or did; and evidently guilty. Overpowered by momentary rage, I seized my sword, resolved to kill them upon the spot: one fled, the other fell at my feet beseeching mercy, a movement that allowed me time to recover my reason. I determined then to turn them both out of the place: turning to Paolo, I exclaimed: "Thou basest of wretches, had my eyes been a little sharper, I would have passed this weapon through thy craven heart. Now thank thy stars, up and away;" and with every opprobrious epithet, cuffs and kicks, I chased both out of my castle.

In conjunction with a low attorney, a Norman, these wretches entered into a foul conspiracy against me, which caused me the greatest uneasiness, and compelled me to seek redress in a court of justice. Thus the more I sought for peace to pursue my occupations the more I encountered tribulation, as if fortune were bent on finding new modes of persecuting me. I began to think of adopting one of two alternatives, either to quit France altogether or to exhaust her full vengeance, and see what strange destiny Heaven had yet in store for me. I persevered, and having threatened to appeal to the king, my enemies took the alarm, and I came off victorious out of this fresh sea of troubles. By meeting it manfully I cleared my character and saved five hundred crowns, the forfeit of my non-appearance in the court. So returning thanks to God, I returned joyfully to my castle, with my young assistants, who had appeared in my behalf. Still I had suffered great anxiety, and I resolved no longer to tempt my evil fortune in France; though I could not abandon the prospects I had in view without extreme regret. I began to make arrange-

ments for such property as I could not carry with me. I sat alone in my little studio to consider over the matter, having requested those of my young men who advised me to take my departure to leave me awhile to my own thoughts; though aware at the same time that they had taken a correct view of the subject. For notwithstanding I had escaped imprisonment, and subdued the fury of my adversaries, I knew that I could much better justify myself to the king by letters, and thus prove their malignant and assassin-like design, than by any other method, and as before said, I decided accordingly. No sooner, however, had I done so than it seemed as if some one slapped me on the shoulder, and exclaimed in a cheering voice: "Courage, Benvenuto! do as you are wont, and fear nothing." Such an effect had this upon my mind that I recovered all my confidence, and determined to put off my journey for a time.

The first vengeance I took on my persecutors was to compel Paolo to marry Caterina, thinking so infamous a couple well suited to each other. This hypocritical fellow undertook what I requested, with such solemn assurances of fidelity and devotion to my interest, that I was induced to place implicit confidence in him. Nevertheless, he very soon betrayed me; and having unquestionable evidence of his guilt as well as Caterina's, and of her mother's connivance, I drove them all from my house. They then invented a horrible accusation against me, which, according to the laws of France, endangered my life; but their detestable conspiracy failed, and my innocence was clearly established.

CHAPTER XXXIII

When once adverse fortune, or the influence of our ill stars, if that expression be more correct, begins to persecute a man, it is never at a loss for means to distress him.

When I thought myself extricated from one troublesome and dangerous affair, and flattered myself that my evil genius would leave me at rest for a while, I was involved again in most perplexing difficulties, and in the space of a few days two accidents befell me, by both of which I was in the most imminent danger of my life. This happened as follows: I was obliged to go to Fontainebleau to wait upon the king, who had written me a letter, desiring me to undertake to strike the coins for his whole kingdom: in the letter he had enclosed some little designs the better to explain his mind, but at the same time he left me at liberty to follow the dictates of my genius. In compliance with his Majesty's orders, I had drawn new designs, in my own taste, and with the utmost elegance of art. Upon my arrival at Fontainebleau, one of the king's treasurers, who had received orders to provide me with whatever I wanted, and whose name was Monsieur de la Faye, said to me: "Benvenuto, Primaticcio the painter has been ordered by the king to make your colossal statue; and all the other great works which had been put into your hands, his Majesty has now taken from you, and given to him. We are all very sorry for it, and think that this countryman of yours has acted very presumptuously, and behaved extremely ill to you; for you had been entrusted with the works on account of the excellence of your models, and your masterly performance; but this man has supplanted you merely through the interest of Madame d'Estampes. It is now several months since he undertook those works, and he has not yet so much as begun a stroke." Hearing this, I exclaimed with surprise: "How is it possible I should never have heard a word of all this?" He answered me that Primaticcio had kept the affair as secret as possible, and obtained his request with the utmost difficulty, the king being very unwilling to grant it; but that Madame d'Estampes had been so earnest in her solicitations, as to extort, in some measure, his compliance.

Finding myself so cruelly wronged, so unjustly treated,

and deprived of a work which was due to me in consideration of the pains I had taken, I resolved to perform some signal feat of arms, and went with the most eager haste in quest of Signor Primaticcio. I found him in his chamber, quite absorbed in study; he bade me come in, and with some of his Lombard civilities asked me what was the best news, and what had brought me thither: I answered, an affair of the last importance. He thereupon ordered his servants to bring wine, and said: "Before we talk about business we must drink together, for that is the custom here in France."—"I must inform you," replied I, "Signor Francesco, that there is no occasion for the conversation, which is to pass between us, to be ushered in with drinking—that, perhaps, may come afterwards." I then continued thus: "All those who profess themselves to be men of worth and virtue show by their actions that they are such; and when they behave otherwise they can no longer be considered in that light. I am sensible that you were not ignorant of the king's having employed me to make the colossus, which has been talked of these eighteen months, and neither you nor anybody else said anything about it during that time. I had by my labours made myself known to that great prince, who was so pleased with my models as to commit this grand undertaking to me, and for many months I heard nothing of his having a different intention: it was not until this morning that I heard it was given to you, and that you had basely undermined me, though I had obtained the work by my successful performances, and you have taken it from me by empty words."—"My friend Benvenuto," answered Primaticcio, "every man endeavours to do the best he can for himself; and if it be the king's pleasure, what objection can you make? Say what you will, you will only lose your labour in talking against the grant; it has been made to me, and cannot be disputed: now speak as much as you please, and I will listen to you in my turn." I thereupon re-

plied to him thus: "I have a great deal to say to you, Signor Francesco, and could by many strong and convincing arguments make you confess that such methods of acting and reasoning as yours are not customary amongst rational animals; but I will be brief, and come directly to the point: listen attentively, for what I am going to say is of great consequence." He was ready to rise from his seat, seeing that I changed colour, and discovered great symptoms of emotion; but I told him it was not yet time for him to stir, and bade him sit still and attend to what I had to say. I then proceeded thus: "Signor Francesco, you know very well that the work was at first put into my hands, and that, according to the practice of the world, it was no longer a proper time for any other person to apply for it: I now declare to you that I am willing you should make a model, and I will make a new one; we then will carry them both to our great monarch, and he who upon that occasion acquits himself best, shall be looked upon as entitled to the honour of making the colossus. If it should happen to be your lot, I will lay aside all resentment of the injury you have done me, and bless your hands as more worthy than mine of so great an honour. Let us therefore make this agreement, and we shall be friends; otherwise we must be enemies; and God, who always assists the just cause, and I, His instrument, will find means to convince you of your error." Signor Francesco answered: "The work is mine; and since it has been given me, I do not choose to run any further risk." To this I replied: "Signor Francesco, since you will not accept of the alternative proposed, which is both just and reasonable, I will offer another to you, which will resemble your own proceeding in its harshness and deformity. I must tell you plainly that if I ever hear you mention a word of this work of mine I will kill you as I would a mad dog; and as we are now neither in Rome, Florence, Naples, nor Bologna, and the manner of living in this country is

quite different, if I ever hear you drop but a word about it to the king, I will instantly put you to death without mercy: think therefore seriously which proposal you choose to accept, the first which is fair, or the last which exposes you to destruction."

The man was at a loss what to say, or how to act, and I was almost preparing to put my design instantly in execution, rather than defer it to some other occasion. He said nothing further than this: "So long as I behave like a man of honour and principle, I shall be free from all fear and apprehensions." To this I replied: "What you say is very just; but when you act in a contrary manner, you have reason to be afraid: remember my words." I thereupon instantly left him to wait on the king, and had a long conference with his Majesty concerning the coins, in which we could not agree; for his privy council being there present, persuaded him that money should still be coined in the same manner as it always had been before that time in France. I answered that his Majesty had invited me from Italy to work for him, so as to deserve approbation; and even if he should give me contrary directions, I could never find it in my heart to obey him. Further conversation upon the subject was deferred to another opportunity, and I returned to Paris. I had hardly dismounted, when one of those busy personages, who delight in spreading mischief, came to inform me that Paolo Micceri had taken a house for his new lady and her mother, and that he made use of the most injurious and contemptuous expressions towards me. "Poor Benvenuto; he paid the piper while I danced; and now he goes about boasting of the exploit. He thinks I am afraid of him;—I who can wear a sword and dagger as well as he; but I would have him to know my weapons are as keen as his. I, too, am a Florentine, and come of the Micceri, a much better house than the Cellini any time of day." In short the vile informer painted the things in such colours to my disadvantage that it fired my whole

blood. I was in a fever of the most dangerous kind; and feeling it must kill me without it found vent, I had recourse to my usual means on such occasions. I called to my workman, Chioccia, to accompany me, and told another to follow me with my horse. On reaching the wretch's house, finding the door half open, I entered abruptly in. There he sat with his "*chère amie*," and his boasted sword and dagger beside him, in the very act of jesting with the elder lady upon my affairs. To slam the door, draw my sword, and present the point to his throat, was the work of a moment, giving him no time to think of defending himself. "Ah! thou vile poltroon, recommend thy soul to God; thou art a dead man." In the excess of his terror, he cried out thrice, in a feeble voice, "Mamma, Mamma, Mamma!—help! help me!" At this ludicrous appeal, so like a girl's, and the ridiculous manner in which it was uttered, though I had a mind to kill, I lost half my rage, and could not forbear laughing. Turning to Chioccia, however, I bade him make fast the door; for I was resolved to inflict the punishment upon all three. Still with my sword point at his throat, and pricking him a little now and then, I terrified him with the most desperate threats; and, finding that he made no defence, was rather at a loss how to proceed. It was too poor a revenge—it was nothing; when suddenly it came into my head to do it effectually, and make him espouse the girl upon the spot. "Up! and off with that ring on thy finger, villain!" I cried, "marry her this instant; and then I shall have my full revenge."—"Anything; anything you like, provided you will not kill me," he eagerly answered. Removing my sword a little: "Now then," I said, "put on the ring;" and he did so, trembling all the time. "This is not enough; go and bring me two notaries to draw up the contract." Then addressing the girl and her mother in French: "While the notaries and witnesses are coming I will give you a word of advice. The first of you that I know to utter a word about my affairs,

I will kill—all three—so keep it in mind." I afterwards said in Italian to Paolo: "If you offer the slightest opposition to the least thing I choose to propose, I will cut you up into mincemeat with this good sword."—"It is enough," he interrupted in alarm, "that you will not kill me. I will do whatever you wish." So this singular contract was duly drawn out and signed; my rage and fever were gone. I paid the notaries, and went home.

The next day Primaticcio came to Paris, and sent Matteo del Nazaro for me: I waited upon him accordingly, when he begged I would consider him in the light of a brother, and declared he would not mention a word concerning the great work to the king, as he was sensible that I must be in the right.

Whilst I was going on with this work, I set apart certain hours of the day to continue the salt-cellar, about which several hands had been employed, for I could not otherwise conveniently work upon the statue of Jupiter. About the time that I had completely finished it, the king was returned to Paris: I paid him a visit, carrying the salt-cellar with me, which, as I have observed above, was of an oval figure, and in size about two-thirds of a cubit, being entirely of gold, and admirably engraved by the chisel. Agreeably to the account already given of the model, I had represented the sea and the earth both in a sitting posture, the legs of one placed between those of the other, as certain arms of the sea enter the land, and certain necks of the land jut out into the sea. The manner in which I designed them was as follows: I put a trident into the right hand of the figure that represented the sea, and in the left a bark of exquisite workmanship, which was to hold the salt: under this figure were its four sea-horses, the form of which in the breast and fore feet resembled that of a horse, and all the hind part from the middle that of a fish: the fishes' tails were entwined with each other in a manner very pleasing to the eye, and the whole group was placed in a striking attitude. This figure

was surrounded by a variety of fishes of different species, and other sea animals. The undulation of the water was properly exhibited, and likewise enamelled with its true colours. The earth I represented by a beautiful female figure holding a cornucopia in her hand, entirely naked, like the male figure; in her left hand she held a little temple, the architecture of the Ionic order, and the workmanship very nice; this was intended to put the pepper in. Under this female figure, I exhibited most of the finest animals which the earth produces, and the rocks I partly enamelled and partly left in gold. I then fixed the work on a base of black ebony of a proper thickness; and there I placed four golden figures in more than mezzo rilievo: these were intended to represent Morning, Noon, Evening, and Night. There were also four other figures of the four principal winds, of the same size, the workmanship and enamel of which were elegant to the last degree.

When I showed the king this piece of work, he burst into an exclamation of surprise, and could never sufficiently admire it; he then bade me carry it home, telling me he would soon let me know what to do with it.

Having taken it back, I immediately invited several of my most intimate friends to dinner, and put the salt-cellar upon the table: thus we were the very first to make use of it, and spent the day very cheerfully. After this I continued to work upon the statue of Jupiter, and the great silver vase already mentioned, on which were engraved several pretty mottoes, with a variety of different figures.

About this time the Bolognese told the king that it would be proper for his Majesty to send him to Rome, and give him letters of recommendation, that he might take designs of the first-rate antiques of that city, the Laocoon, the Cleopatra, the Venus, the Commodus, the Apollo, and the Zingara; which are indeed the finest things in Rome. He at the same time told the monarch that his Majesty, by seeing those admirable masterpieces, would be able to

form a judgment of the art of drawing: for all the works of modern artists that had been shown him were infinitely inferior to the masterly performances of the ancients. The king approved of his proposal, and gave him all the encouragement he desired. So the fool went off in this manner, and not having the spirit to rival me, had recourse to this artifice, worthy of a Lombard, of pretending to praise the works of the ancients in order to depreciate mine; but though he took excellent drawings of them, his success proved quite the reverse of what he had flattered himself it would, as we shall inform the reader in due time.

Having entirely discontinued my connection with that wretch Catharine, and the poor unfortunate young man who had conspired with her to wrong me being gone from Paris, I intended to have my ornament for Fontainebleau, which was of bronze, properly cleaned, as likewise to get the two figures of Victory, which extended from the side angles to the middle circle of the gate, furbished up. For this purpose I took into my house a poor girl about fifteen years of age: she was extremely well shaped, lively, and of a complexion rather swarthy; and as she was somewhat rustic, spoke little, walked fast, and had a sort of wildness in her eyes, I gave her the name of Scozzona; but her own name was Gianna. With her assistance I completely finished my Fontainebleau and the two Victories intended for ornaments to the gate. By this Gianna I had a daughter, on the seventh of June, at three in the afternoon, in the year 1544, when I was precisely in the forty-fourth year of my age. I gave this child the name of Constantia, and she was held upon the font by Signor Guido Guidi, physician to the king, and one of my most intimate friends. He alone stood godfather; for the custom of France is, that there should be but one godfather and two godmothers. One of these was Signora Maddalena, wife to Signor Luigi Alamanni, a gentleman of Florence, and an admirable poet; the other godmother

was a French lady of good family, wife of Signor Riccardo del Bene, also citizen of Florence, and an eminent merchant. This was the first child that I ever had to the best of my remembrance. I assigned the mother such a maintenance, as satisfied an aunt of hers, into whose hands I put her; and never had any acquaintance with her afterwards.

I continued my works with all possible expedition, and by this time they were in great forwardness: the Jupiter was as good as finished, so was the vase, and the gate began to display its beauties. Just at this time the king arrived at Paris; and though I have spoken of the birth of my daughter as having happened in 1544, at the time now under consideration the year 1543 was not quite elapsed. This was owing to my having occasion to speak of my daughter; however, to avoid interrupting the relation of affairs of greater importance, I shall drop the subject at present, and resume it in its proper place. The king came to Paris, as I have said already, and immediately repaired to my house, where my works were in such forwardness that they gave great satisfaction to the eye: the monarch was as much pleased with them as an artist could wish, who had bestowed great pains on his productions. He recollected, of himself, that the Cardinal of Ferrara had given me none of the money that he had promised me: so, talking in a low voice to his admiral, he said that the Cardinal of Ferrara had done very wrong in not paying me; but that he himself would see justice done me; for he perceived that I was a man of few words, and would leave the kingdom if I were not satisfied. Without adding a word more, they withdrew, and the king after dinner bade the cardinal tell the treasurer to pay me, with all possible expedition, seven thousand gold crowns at three or four disbursements, according as he found it convenient, and not to fail at his peril. He then concluded with these words: "I had put Benvenuto under your care, and you have quite forgotten him." The

cardinal assured the king that he would punctually obey his orders; but the natural malignity of his temper made him stay till the monarch's fit of generosity and good-nature was over.

In the meantime France was threatened more and more with the calamities of war, and the emperor with a numerous army seemed to be on the point of marching to Paris. The cardinal, perceiving that money was very scarce in the kingdom, took occasion one day to speak of me to the king in these terms: "I thought it best not to give Benvenuto the money your Majesty ordered him; and one of my reasons was, that you now stand but too much in need of it yourself; the other, that so generous a present would have deprived us of him the sooner, for if once he had found himself rich, he would have purchased an estate in Italy, and when the whim took him would certainly have left you. So I have considered with myself that it is most advisable your Majesty should assign him some settlement in your own dominions, if you desire that he should continue any considerable time in your service." The king seemed to approve of what was said; however, with a greatness of soul worthy of such a monarch, he took it into consideration that the cardinal had acted as he had done, rather to gratify his own temper than because he had so long before had the sagacity to foresee the distressed state of so great a kingdom. Thus, though the king appeared to assent outwardly to the reasons assigned by the cardinal, his private sentiments were very different; for he soon returned to Paris, and the day after his arrival came of his own accord to my own house, when I conducted him through several apartments, in which there was a variety of works of different sorts.

Beginning with those of least value, I showed him several pieces of bronze, which surpassed anything of the kind he had ever beheld. I then led him to the silver Jupiter, and he was pleased to find it almost finished, with all its beautiful ornaments. This indeed he admired

much more than any other man would have done, on account of an unlucky accident which had happened to him a few years before, when the emperor, intending an expedition against the town of Tunis, passed through Paris with the consent of the French monarch. Francis, being desirous of making Charles a present worthy of so great an emperor, caused a silver Hercules to be cast for that purpose, exactly of the same size with my Jupiter. This Hercules was a most ordinary piece of work; and when the king found fault with it, the artists whom he had employed, and who pretended to be the greatest masters in the whole world, maintained that nothing more complete could be made of silver, insisting upon two thousand ducats for their bungling piece of work. For this reason, when his Majesty saw my performance, he was surprised at the admirable finish of it, which he could never have conceived. To such a degree was he pleased with my statue of Jupiter that he valued it at two thousand crowns, and said: "Those ignorant artists received no recompense from me: for this I will give a thousand crowns, and it is well worth the money." I then took his Majesty to see some other performances, both in silver and gold, and many other models of new works. At last when he was upon the point of departing, I conducted him through the castle garden, where I showed him my statue of the great giant.

The king discovered the greatest astonishment imaginable, and turning about spoke thus to the admiral, who was Mons. d'Annebaut: "Since the cardinal has not yet supplied this man with money, and the latter is so backward to ask it, I must without more delay take care to provide for him myself; for when artists are too modest to ask any recompense, their works seem sufficiently to claim it. Therefore give him the first abbey that becomes vacant, the revenue of which amounts to two thousand crowns a year, and in case you cannot let him have it in one benefice, give it him in two or three: it

will be the same thing to him." I was present, heard all that was said, and immediately returned thanks to his Majesty, as if I had the abbey already in my possession; telling him that I intended when that work was finished to serve his Majesty without any other reward, salary, or recompense for my labour, till old age should render me incapable of working, when I might be allowed to retire to necessary repose, happy in the remembrance of having served so great a monarch. To this the king with great alacrity answered, "So be it;" and left me in high spirits.

CHAPTER XXXIV

MADAME D'ESTAMPES, having heard of my encouragement, was more provoked against me than ever, and said: "I govern the whole kingdom, and yet this insignificant fellow sets my power at defiance." In a word, she left no stone unturned to effect my destruction. A great distiller happening to fall in her way, gave her certain odoriferous waters of an extraordinary virtue for the skin, which had never been used in France before that time: this man she introduced to the king, to whom he showed certain operations in distilling, with which his Majesty was highly delighted. During these amusements she made the distiller apply to the king for a tennis-court at my castle, with certain little apartments belonging to it, of which he said I made no use. The king, who knew with whom this application originated, returned no answer whatever. Madame d'Estampes thereupon began to solicit him, and made use of all those insinuating arts with which women know how to work upon men; and so successful did she prove, that happening to find the king in an amorous mood, to which he was very subject, he granted the lady all she desired.

Thereupon the distiller came, accompanied by the trea-

surer Glorier, one of the first nobility of France, who understood Italian incomparably well. In this language he talked to me at first in a jocular manner, and then coming to the point, told me that in the king's name he put the other man in possession of that tennis-court, and the little apartments adjoining to it. To this I answered: "His sacred Majesty is master of this house, and of everything in it; you might therefore enter with the utmost freedom. But this manner of taking possession in the manner of notaries and courts appears to be rather a trick than the order of so great a monarch: I therefore protest to you that instead of going to complain to his Majesty, I will defend myself in the manner that he commanded me the other day; that is, I will throw this man whom you have placed here out of the window, if I do not see a commission signed with his Majesty's own hand."

Upon my expressing myself thus the treasurer went away menacing and muttering to himself, and I remained in equal ill humour, but made no further stir in his presence. Soon after he was gone I went in quest of the notaries who had put the man in possession. These, being my intimate acquaintances, gave me to understand that it was a ceremony performed by the king's authority, but not of much consequence; and if I had made ever so little resistance, the man would not have taken possession as he did; adding that these were acts and customs of the court, which did not concern the obedience due to the king, insomuch that, if I thought proper to dispossess him in the same manner as he had taken possession, I should do very well, and need not be under any apprehensions with regard to the consequences. Being thus sufficiently instructed, I the next day had recourse to open violence. Though there were some difficulties in the way, I took pleasure in contending with them, and every day made some assault with stones, pikes, or muskets: I however fired without ball; but even so, struck such terror into my adversary's adherents that nobody chose

afterwards to stir to his assistance. One day, therefore, finding his resistance feeble, I entered the house by force, and drove him out, throwing all his goods and furniture after him. I then repaired to the king, and told him that I had done what he had commanded me, and defended myself against all those that offered to impede me in his Majesty's service. The king laughed, and caused new letters to be issued, to secure me from being molested for the future.

In the meantime, having with the utmost diligence finished the beautiful statue of Jupiter, with its gilt pedestal, I placed it upon a wooden socle, which scarce made any appearance, and within that socle I fixed four little globes of wood, which were more than half hidden in their sockets, and so admirably contrived that a little child could with the utmost ease move this statue of Jupiter backwards and forwards, and turn it about. Having adjusted it properly, I took it with me to Fontainebleau, where the king then resided. Just about this time Primaticcio had brought the figures already mentioned from Rome, and caused them to be cast in bronze with the utmost care. I knew nothing at all of the matter, for he had transacted the business with great secrecy, and Fontainebleau is above forty miles from Paris. Upon my inquiring of the king, in the presence of Madame d'Estampes, where I was to place the statue of Jupiter, the latter told his Majesty that there was not a more proper place than his beautiful gallery. This is what we might call a portico, or rather a corridor: it might indeed be most properly distinguished by the latter name, because we give the appellation of portico to those walks which are open on one side. This place was about two hundred paces long, adorned and enriched with pictures by the admirable Rosso of Florence, intermixed with several pieces of sculpture, some detached and others in basso-rilievo: the breadth about twelve paces. Here it was that Primaticcio had assembled all his bronze figures,

and placed them in the most regular order upon their pedestals. As I have observed above, there were amongst them some of the finest imitations of the antique statues of Rome. Here also I introduced my Jupiter; and when I saw this great display of the wonders of art, I said to myself: "This is like passing between the pikes of the enemy; Heaven protect me from all danger!" Having put the statue into its place, and fixed it in the most advantageous situation I could, I awaited the coming of the great monarch.

This figure of Jupiter had a thunderbolt in his right hand, and by his attitude seemed to be just going to throw it: in his left I had placed a globe, and amongst the flames I had with great dexterity put a piece of white torch. Madame d'Estampes had detained the king till night, with a design to make mischief, either by preventing his coming or contriving to make my work appear unfavourably in the night. As God, however, has promised to befriend such of His creatures as put their trust in Him, it happened quite contrary to her expectations; for, on the approach of night, I lighted the torch in the hand of Jupiter, and as it was raised somewhat above his head, the light fell upon the statue, and caused it to appear to much greater advantage than it would otherwise have done. The king came, accompanied by Madame d'Estampes, the Dauphin his son, now King of France, and the Dauphiness, the King of Navarre his cousin, the Princess Margaret his daughter, and several great lords and noblemen, who had all been instructed by Madame d'Estampes to speak against me. When I saw his Majesty enter, I ordered my boy Ascanio to push the statue of Jupiter before him, and this motion being made with admirable contrivance, caused it to appear alive; thus the above-mentioned bronze figures were left somewhat behind, and the eyes of all the beholders were first struck with my performance. The king immediately cried out: "This is one of the finest productions of art that ever

was beheld: I who take pleasure in such things and understand them, could never have conceived a piece of work the hundredth part so beautiful." The noblemen who had been directed to rail at my performance, seemed now to vie with each other in praising it; but Madame d'Estampes said, with the utmost confidence: "It appears to me that you are very much at a loss for something to commend, when you lavish encomiums upon that statue. Don't you see those beautiful antique figures which stand a little beyond it? In these the utmost perfection of art is displayed, and not in those modern ridiculous works of art." The king then advanced, as did the rest likewise, and cast an eye upon the other figures, which appeared to a great disadvantage, the light being placed below them. His Majesty observing this, said: "Those who have endeavoured to hurt this man have done him the greatest service imaginable; for, from a comparison with these admirable figures, it is evident this statue is in every respect vastly superior to them. Benvenuto is therefore worthy of the highest esteem, since his performances, instead of being barely upon a par with those of the ancients, greatly surpass them." In answer to this, Madame d'Estampes observed that my statue would not at daytime appear a thousandth part so well as it did by night; and that it should be further taken into consideration that I had thrown a veil over the figure to conceal its blemishes. This was an exceedingly thin drapery, which I had placed so gracefully that it gave additional majesty to the figure. Upon hearing the above words, I took hold of the veil, and pulling it away discovered the parts it was intended to conceal. The lady thought I had done this out of contempt. The king perceived her resentment; and I, being overcome with passion, was just going to speak, when the wise monarch uttered these words deliberately, in his own language: "Benvenuto, I must interrupt you—therefore be silent—and you shall have a thousand times more treasure than you could wish."

Not being allowed to speak, I discovered my emotion by my contortions: this caused the lady to be more highly incensed than ever, and made her mutter her indignation to herself. The king left the place much sooner than he otherwise would have done, declaring aloud, for my encouragement, that he had brought over from Italy one of the ablest men that the world had ever produced, and one who was endowed with the greatest variety of talents.

I left my statue there, and as I chose to quit the place that morning, the king ordered me a thousand crowns, partly as a recompense for my labour, and partly in payment of sums, which appeared from my accounts to have been disbursed by myself. Having received the money, I returned to Paris, and immediately upon my arrival made merry at my own house. After dinner I caused all my clothes to be brought me, which were of the finest furs, or the very best cloth: out of these I made presents to all my workmen, distributing them according to their deserts, and even giving some to the maids and the stable-boys; thereby encouraging them to assist me with alacrity. I set about finishing my statue of Mars, which I had made of pieces of wood well fastened together, over which the flesh was represented by a covering, in thickness about equal to the eighth part of a cubit, made of plaster, and of the most elegant workmanship. I afterwards formed a resolution to make up the figure of several different pieces, and to put them together according to the rules of art; and this I with great ease effected.

I must not omit to mention one circumstance that attended this great work, a thing indeed highly laughable. I had given strict orders to all those who lived with me not to bring any women into my castle, and was particularly careful to see my orders obeyed. My boy Ascanio was in love with a girl of extraordinary beauty, who answered his passion with equal ardour. The girl, having on that account fled from her mother, came one night to Ascanio, and not caring afterwards to return home, he

was at a loss where to conceal her; but necessity sharpening his wit, he bethought himself of the odd expedient of hiding her in my Mars, and let her sleep in the head of the statue. There he stayed to watch her, and in the night he took her out sometimes, without making any noise. I had almost finished that head, and vanity prompted me to leave it uncovered, so that it was every day exposed to the view of the inhabitants of Paris. The neighbours began to climb upon the roofs of their houses to see it, and great numbers of people went thither on purpose to indulge their curiosity. At the same time a report became current at Paris, that my old castle was haunted by a ghost; but, for my part, I could never perceive anything to induce me to think it was well founded. This ghost was universally called Lemmonio Boreo through the city of Paris. Now, as the girl who was concealed in the head could not but be sometimes seen to move, while her eyes were more or less apparent, some of the foolish and credulous populace affirmed that the ghost had entered the body of the great statue, and that it made the eyes and mouth move as if it was just going to speak. Accordingly many went away frightened out of their wits; and some persons of penetration and sagacity, who came to see the figure, could not doubt the truth of what they had heard, when they contemplated the fire and brightness of the eyes of the said figure. So they declared in their turn that there was a spirit within it; not being aware that there was not only spirit in it, but likewise good flesh and blood. In the meantime I was busy in putting together my fine gate, with all the ornaments described above.

CHAPTER XXXV

As I do not mean to relate in this narrative of my life things which do not concern me, but the writers of chronicles, I have passed over the arrival of the emperor on the

French frontiers with a numerous army, and the king's drawing together a considerable body of troops to oppose him. His Majesty about this time consulted me concerning the means of expeditiously fortifying Paris; he came purposely to my house in quest of me, led me all round the city, and perceiving how judiciously I spoke on the subject of fortifications, he empowered me by an express commission to cause all I proposed to be instantly carried into execution. At the same time he signified to his admiral, Sieur Annebaut, to order the people to obey me upon pain of his displeasure. The admiral was a man of no genius, who owed his exalted dignity to the favour of Madame d'Estampes, and not to any merit of his own; though well deserving his name, which they pronounced Ane-et-bo, *ass and ox*. This blockhead having told Madame d'Estampes of all that had passed between the king and me, she commanded him to send for Girolamo Bellarmato directly; the latter was an engineer of Siena, who lived not above a day's journey from Paris. He instantly came, and had recourse to the most slow and tedious method of fortification. I concerned myself no longer in the affair; and if the emperor had advanced briskly to Paris, that city might have been easily taken. It was said, with great truth, that in the treaty afterwards concluded, Madame d'Estampes, who was the person most concerned in negotiating it, had betrayed the king, and exposed him to the enemy. I shall say nothing further concerning this matter, because it does not enter into my plan, nor is it connected with the main subject of my narrative.

I then set about finishing my gate of bronze with the utmost assiduity and expedition, as likewise my great vase, and two other middle-sized ones, made of my own silver. The good king, after all his various distresses, came to rest himself for a while at Paris; and as his pestilential mistress seemed born for the destruction of the kingdom, I think I may justly value myself upon her hating me as her capital enemy. Having entered into a conversation with the king

concerning my affair, she spoke so ill of me, that the easy monarch, through complaisance for that deceitful woman, swore he would never show me the least favour, no more than if he had not known any such person. These words were immediately repeated to me by a page of the Cardinal of Ferrara, whose name was Villa; he told me he had himself heard them from the king's own mouth.

This intelligence put me into so violent a passion that, having thrown down my tools and all my other works, I formed a resolution to quit the kingdom directly. I repaired that moment to the king, after he had dined, and entered an apartment where his Majesty was with a very few persons attending him. When he saw me, I bowed to him with the respect due to a king, and he nodded to me with a cheerful countenance. I then began to conceive some hopes, and gradually approached his Majesty, because they were showing him some things connected with my profession. After some little conversation concerning these matters, the monarch asked me whether I had anything worth seeing to show at my house, adding that he would go thither to see it whenever I thought it convenient. I made answer that I was then ready to show him something curious, if agreeable to his Majesty. He then ordered me to go home, and said he would follow me without delay. I went accordingly, and waited the coming of the good monarch, who was gone to take his leave of Madame d'Estampes. The lady having heard where he was going, told his Majesty that she did not choose to accompany him; and moreover requested him not to go to my house that day himself. She used reiterated entreaties to dissuade him from his purpose, and that day he did not come near me.

The day following I returned to his Majesty at the very same hour; the instant that he saw me he swore he would repair directly to my house. Whilst he was taking his leave of his dear Madame d'Estampes, she, through spite at her not having influence enough to prevent his

going, spoke as bitterly of me as if I had been an inveterate enemy to the crown. The king declared that his sole intention in going to see me was to scold and reproach me in such terms as would not fail to throw me into a panic. He faithfully promised Madame d'Estampes that he would act in that manner. When he came to my house I showed him into some ground-floor apartments, in which I had put together the several parts of the gate of Fontainebleau; the king was seized with such astonishment that he could not find in his heart to load me with abuse, as he had promised Madame d'Estampes. He did not, however, choose entirely to swerve from his word, as appears from his having expressed himself to this effect: "It is something extraordinary, Benvenuto, that you men of genius are not sensible of your inability to display your talents without our assistance, and that you show yourselves great only by means of the opportunities that we afford you: it would become you to be a little more humble, and less proud and opinionative. I remember I gave you express orders to make twelve silver statues for me, and that was all I desired of you; but you took it into your head to make me a salt-cellar, vases, heads, and a thousand other fancies of your own; insomuch that I am quite surprised you should neglect all that I required of you, and mind nothing but pleasing yourself. If you continue to behave thus, I will show you in what manner I am used to proceed when I want to have things done my own way. I must therefore repeat it to you that I insist upon your showing yourself obedient when I lay my commands upon you, because, if you continue obstinate in your whims, you will only run your head against the wall."

Whilst his Majesty uttered these words, the noblemen stood with the most profound attention, perceiving that he shook his head, knit his brows, and used a variety of gestures, sometimes with one hand, and sometimes with the other; all present, therefore, began to tremble for me

but I myself was not at all alarmed. As soon as he had made an end of reprimanding me, as he had promised Madame d'Estampes, I knelt with one knee upon the ground, and kissing his mantle, addressed him in the following terms: "Sire, I acknowledge the truth of what you say: all I have to allege in my defence is, that my heart has been constantly attentive day and night to obey and serve you, to the utmost extent of all my faculties. Whatever appears to the contrary to your Majesty, you may depend upon it, does not come from Benvenuto, but is the work of my adverse fate, which has rendered me unworthy of serving the greatest prince that the world ever beheld; I therefore humbly entreat you to pardon me. But it appeared to me that your Majesty gave me silver for one statue only, and, as I had none of my own, I could make only that; so with the little silver that was left, I made the vase, to give your Majesty an idea of the beautiful manner of antiquity which in that species of work was perhaps unknown to you before. With regard to the salt-cellar, it seems to me, as well as I can recollect, that you one day desired me to make one, in consequence of some conversation concerning a salt-cellar that was shown you; upon which I produced you a model which I had formerly made in Italy, solely at your Majesty's request, and you were pleased to order me a thousand ducats for making it, declaring yourself highly pleased with my performance; I thought you even went so far as to thank me, when I gave it to you finished. As for the gate, I apprehend that your Majesty, in some occasional conversation, gave orders to Mons. de Villeroy, your secretary, to direct MM. Marmande and Fay to employ me in such a work, and supply me with money; for without that assistance, that I might try the different nature of French clays, I could not possibly have gone on with the work. With regard to the heads, I should not have thought of casting such large pieces, except merely to try my hand at that branch of business. The bases I

made in a persuasion that they were admirably suited to such figures; however, in all I undertook I endeavoured to do my best, and never lost sight of what your Majesty intended. True it is, I made the great colossal statue, and brought it to its present degree of perfection at my own expense; for it appeared to me that it would become the dignity of so great a monarch, and reflect some honour on my slender abilities, that such a statue should be made in your kingdom, as had never been seen by the ancients. But since I perceive that God has not thought proper to render me worthy of so honourable a service, I request of your Majesty, that instead of the noble recompense you intended to make me for my labours, you would only give me a small share of your good-will, and leave to depart. If you condescend to grant me this favour, I will instantly set out for Italy, returning thanks to the Supreme Being for the happy hours that I have been in your Majesty's service."

When I had finished, the king took me by the hand, and in the kindest manner imaginable, raised me from the ground; he told me that I ought to be contented to remain in his service, and that all I had done for him he was highly pleased with. Turning afterwards to the noblemen present, he deliberately uttered these words: "I really believe that if there were to be gates to Paradise, they never could be finer than such as this." When I saw that he had made an end of his angry speaking, though his words were highly favourable to me, I again in the most respectful manner returned him thanks, at the same time repeating my request to be dismissed, as my resentment had not yet entirely subsided. The great monarch, perceiving that I made such a return to his extraordinary caresses, commanded me, in a loud and tremendous voice, not to utter another word, for that if I did I should repent it. He further added that he would smother me in gold, and that he gave me leave to depart; that the works which he had employed me upon were r

so much as begun; but with respect to what I had done of my own head, he was very well pleased; that I should never more have any difference with him, because he knew me thoroughly; and that I should endeavour to study his temper, and know him, as duty required of me. After answering that I thanked God and his Majesty for everything, I requested him to come and take a view of the colossal statue, which was by this time in great forwardness; so he came to my house. I caused the statue to be uncovered, and nothing could equal his astonishment at beholding it; he gave orders to one of his secretaries instantly to reimburse me the money I had spent out of my own pocket, let the sum be ever so great, provided I gave him an account written with my own hand; upon which he left the place, saying to me, "Adieu, *mon ami*," farewell, my friend—an expression seldom used by a king.

When he got back to his palace, he could not help thinking of the words I had used to him, some of which were so very humble, and others so excessively proud and haughty that they had nettled him greatly. Some of the latter he repeated before Madame d'Estampes, when M. de St. Pol, one of the great barons of France, happened to be present. That nobleman, who had always warmly professed himself my friend, upon that occasion proved the sincerity of his professions like a true Frenchman. After a good deal of conversation the king was complaining of the Cardinal of Ferrara, that, when he had put me under his care, he gave himself no longer any concern about me; and though I had not quitted the kingdom, it was not the cardinal that had prevented me; therefore he had serious thoughts of putting me under the care of some other person fitter for that office, as he did not choose to be any longer in danger of losing me. At these words M. de St. Pol offered his service, telling the king that he would take particular care that I should no longer be any way tempted to leave the kingdom. The

king replied that he consented, if St. Pol would tell him the method he would pursue to prevent me from deserting his service. Madame d'Estampes all this while was in a very ill humour, and St. Pol for a time declined answering his Majesty; but the king having asked the question a second time, St. Pol, to please Madame d'Estampes, answered, "I should order Benvenuto to be hanged, and then you would be sure of his not making his escape out of the kingdom." Madame d'Estampes burst into a loud laugh, and declared it was what I very well deserved. The king thereupon began to laugh to keep her company: he agreed, he said, to St. Pol's hanging me, provided the latter could first find an artist of equal abilities; and though I had never done anything to deserve hanging, he in that case left him entirely at liberty to act as he thought proper. Thus did the day end, and I remained in security and perfect health, for which thanks and praise be to the Almighty.

The king had now concluded the war with the emperor, but not that with the English, insomuch that these devils caused us great perplexity. The king, whose thoughts were not entirely engrossed by pleasure, had commanded Piero Strozzi to sail with certain galleys into the English seas, though it was a very difficult and dangerous enterprise. That excellent officer was one of the greatest men of the age in which he lived, and at the same time one of the most unfortunate. Several months had passed since I had received any money, or any order to work, insomuch that I had dismissed all my journeymen except the two Italians, whom I employed in making two little vases of my own silver, because they did not understand working in bronze. As soon as they had finished these pieces I carried them to a town belonging to the Queen of Navarre, called Argenton, distant several days' journey from Paris. I arrived at the place, and found the king indisposed. The Cardinal of Ferrara informed his Majesty of my arrival; the king made him no answer; so that I was obliged to

stay there several days in great perplexity, and indeed I never was more disgusted in the whole course of my life. Not long after I presented myself one evening before his Majesty, and showed him the two fine vases, with which he was highly delighted.

When I saw him in a good humour, I requested him to let me make a tour to Italy, for pleasure and recreation, and engaged to leave seven months' salary, which his Majesty was in arrear to me, to be remitted to me in Italy, in case I wanted it. I begged that he would be graciously pleased to grant me that favour, as it was then a time to think of military operations, and not of making statues. I added that, as his Majesty had granted Primaticcio the painter such a favour, I hoped he would show me the same indulgence. Whilst I uttered these words the king looked attentively at the two vases, and sometimes frowned on me so sternly that I was quite shocked; I however continued to request the same favour, and entreated him to grant it me in the most persuasive manner I possibly could. He appeared to me to be in a great passion, and, upon his rising, spoke to me thus in Italian: "Benvenuto, you are a great fool; carry those vases directly to Paris, for I want to have them gilt;" and without making me any other answer, he departed. I repaired to the Cardinal of Ferrara, and requested him, that since he had been so good a friend to me in delivering me out of prison in Rome, and conferring on me so many other favours, he would add one more to them, in endeavouring to procure leave for me from his Majesty to return to Italy. The cardinal made answer that he would gladly do anything that lay in his power to oblige me, and that I might leave the affair entirely to him; nay, that if I chose it, I might go directly, and he would take care to excuse me to the king. I then said to him, that since his Majesty had put me under the care of his reverence, if he were pleased to give me leave, I would set out directly, and return whenever he should think proper to signify his pleasure. The cardinal desired

me to go to Paris, and stay there a week, assuring me that he would in that time obtain leave for me to return to my own country; that in case, however, the king should disapprove of my going, he would let me know it by letter; but if I did not hear from him in that time, I might set out for Italy.

CHAPTER XXXVI

At my return to Paris I followed the cardinal's directions and made very fine cases for the two pieces of plate. Twenty days being expired, I got ready for my departure, and put the two vases upon a mule of burden, which had been lent me to go as far as Lyons, by the Bishop of Pavia, to whom I had again given an apartment in my castle. I departed, in an unlucky hour, with Signor Ippolito Gonzaga, who received the king's pay, and was likewise in the service of Count Galeotto of Mirandola, with some other gentlemen belonging to the said count. Lionardo Tedaldi, a Florentine, likewise went with us. I left under the care of my journeymen my castle and all my effects, amongst which were some little vases just begun, so that they had no occasion to remain idle. There was likewise in my house a good deal of furniture of great value, for I made a considerable figure at Paris. The value of these effects of mine amounted to above fifteen hundred crowns.

I desired Ascanio to remember all the favours he had received from me, telling him that hitherto he had been only a giddy youth, but it was then high time for him to think solidly, and behave like a man; that I chose to leave under his care all my effects, and even my honour itself; adding, that in case he happened to be ill-used by any of those French rascals, he had no more to do but write to me, and I would instantly ride post to Paris, as well on account of the great obligations I had to the King of

France as to assert my honour. Ascanio said to me, with the counterfeit tears of a thief: "I never had a more indulgent and tender father than you: I will therefore always behave to you as the most dutiful son would to the best and kindest of fathers." Matters being thus settled, I set out, attended by a footman and a little French boy. Soon after noon some of the treasurers, who were by no means my friends, came to my house. These villains ordered Signor Guido and the Bishop of Pavia to send after me directly for the king's vases, otherwise they would despatch a person for them in a manner that I should not like. The bishop and Signor Guido were much more alarmed upon the occasion than was necessary, so that they immediately sent after me the treacherous Ascanio, whom I saw about midnight. I was kept awake by my anxiety, and said in a sorrowful mood to myself: "To whose care do I leave my effects and my castle? What strange decree of fate obliges me to undertake this journey? The cardinal must certainly be in a confederacy with Madame d'Estampes, who desires nothing more earnestly than that I should forfeit that good king's favour."

Whilst I was in this agitation of mind, hearing myself called by Ascanio, I instantly rose, and asked him whether he brought me good or bad news. The thief answered: "I bring you good news; but you must send back the vases, for those rogues of treasurers make a terrible stir about them; so that the bishop and Signor Guido insist upon your sending them back by all means. Be under no apprehensions about anything else, but make your tour, and enjoy all the pleasures that life can afford." I thereupon put the two vases into his hands, but the money and other effects I carried to the abbey of the Cardinal of Ferrara at Lyons; for though it was given out that I intended to carry them with me to Italy, it is well known that no specie, either gold or silver, can be conveyed out of the kingdom without particular permission. It should

therefore be well considered, whether it would have been possible for me to carry off the three large beautiful vases, which with the boxes that contained them loaded a mule. It is true that as they were very fine things, and of great value, I was apprehensive of the king's death, having left him very much indisposed; but I comforted myself with the reflection that if anything were to happen I could not lose them, as they were in the hands of the cardinal. To proceed: I sent back the mule with the vases and other things of value, and with the company above mentioned continued my journey the next morning. But all the way I could not refrain from sighing and weeping. I sometimes indeed sought consolation by addressing myself to God in such terms as these: "O Lord, to whom the truth is manifest, Thou knowest that I travel in this manner merely to assist six poor unfortunate maidens, and their mother, who is my own sister; for though their father is still living, he is so far advanced in years, and gains so little by his business, that they may probably be in very distressed circumstances; therefore in performing this pious office I hope from Thy Divine Majesty assistance and advice." This was my only consolation as I travelled on to Italy.

When we were within a day's journey of Lyons, it being almost ten o'clock at night, some dry thunder-claps were heard, and lightning flashed in the air; I was about a bowshot before my companions. After the lightning such a terrible peal of thunder was heard in the sky that I thought it was the day of judgment. I stopped awhile, when there began to fall a thick shower of hail, without a single drop of rain. The hailstones were of an extraordinary thickness, and hurt me excessively—they were the size of cerbottana balls. The shower grew thicker and thicker, so that the hailstones at last became really as big as the stones of a cross-bow. Perceiving my horse terribly frightened, I rode back with the utmost speed, till I came up with my company, who being seized with

a panic of the same sort, had taken shelter in a grove of pines. The hail at length rose to the size of lemons, and I cried out, "Have mercy upon me, O God." Whilst I was devoutly addressing the Deity, an enormous hailstone broke off a large branch of the pine-tree, under the shelter of which I thought myself in safety: another great hailstone fell upon the head of my horse, which seemed just ready to drop down; and one of them struck myself, but not directly, for it would certainly have killed me: another likewise struck poor old Lionardo Tedaldi, so that he, who like me had been almost upon his knees, fell with his hands to the ground. Perceiving, then, that this tree could no longer afford shelter either to myself or the rest, and that besides singing psalms some exertion of the faculties was necessary, I began to wrap my clothes about my head, and told Lionardo, who was incessantly crying out, "Help, Jesus, Jesus!" that Jesus would assist him if he endeavoured to help himself: so that I had more trouble in attending to this old man's preservation than my own. This storm lasted for a considerable time, and at length ceased.

After we had been all terribly pelted, we remounted our horses as well as we could; and whilst we were travelling on to the inn where we intended to lodge, and showing each other our hurts and bruises, we found, at about a mile's distance, a scene of distress so much deeper than our own, that it is almost impossible to describe it. All the trees were broken down, and all the cattle deprived of life: we likewise found a great many shepherds killed, and upon seeing several hailstones, which a man would have found it a difficult matter to have grasped with both hands, we thought ourselves very happy in having come off as we did. We were then sensible, that calling upon God and singing those psalms had done us more good than we could have done ourselves: we therefore returned thanks to the Supreme Being, and continued our journey the next day to Lyons, where we made a stay of a week. After having

well refreshed ourselves, we continued our journey, and passed the mountains happily: there I bought a colt, because the baggage I had with me had quite fatigued my horses.

When we had been a day in Italy, we were joined by Count Galeotto of Mirandola, who had travelled post. He stayed awhile with us, and told me that I had taken a wrong step in leaving France; that it would be advisable for me not to proceed any farther, because my affairs might suddenly change their aspect, and take a more favourable turn than ever. He concluded with observing that by continuing my journey I should open a field to my enemies, and give them an opportunity of hurting me; whereas by returning directly I should defeat the stratagems of their malice, and prevent them from taking effect. He added that those in whom I put the greatest confidence were the very persons who imposed upon me. The count did not choose to explain himself any further, but knew very well that the Cardinal of Ferrara was in a confederacy with my two rogues of journeymen, in whose care I had left all my effects. He again repeated it, that I ought by all means to return to Paris; and, taking leave of me, travelled on with post-horses, whilst I, with my company above mentioned, chose to ride forward also. Being in a constant agitation, sometimes wishing to arrive speedily at Florence, sometimes desirous to return to France, I continued in this irresolute state, till at last I formed a resolution to take post in order to reach Florence with the utmost expedition. As I could not reconcile my mind to go back to France, I determined to go and pass a melancholy life at Florence; and, therefore, not agreeing with the first post, I parted company with Signor Ippolito Gonzaga, who had taken the road to Mirandola; mine was through Parma and Piacenza.

Being arrived at Piacenza, I happened to meet in one of the streets of that city with the Duke Pier Luigi, who, examining me attentively, knew me again. Sensible that all I had suffered in the Castle of St. Angelo arose from

this man, I felt the utmost indignation at the sight of him; but not being able to think of any expedient to get out of his power, I at last resolved to pay him a visit. I entered just as the servants were clearing the table, and there were with him some persons belonging to the family of Landi, the same by whom he was afterwards murdered. At my arrival he lavished caresses upon me. He then entered into conversation, and told those present that I was the first man of the age, and that I had been a long time in prison at Rome. He addressed himself afterwards to me, saying, "My good friend Benvenuto, I was very sorry for your misfortune, from my consciousness of your innocence, but it was not in my power to relieve you. My father persecuted you at the instigation of some of your enemies, who had insinuated that you had spoken ill of him, though I am certain you never did; and I was very much concerned for your sufferings." To these words he added so many more of the same tendency, that he seemed almost to ask my pardon. He inquired next about the several pieces of work that I had done for his most Christian Majesty. Upon my giving him an account of them, he seemed to be all attention, and listened to me with the greatest complaisance imaginable. This being over, he asked me whether I was willing to enter into his service? I answered that I could not, consistently with the laws of honour; adding that when I had once finished the great works that I had begun for the king, I would neglect the service of all the greatest lords to devote myself entirely to his excellency.

Upon this occasion Divine justice, which never leaves those unpunished who oppress and ill-treat the innocent, displayed itself conspicuously. This man, as it were, asked pardon of me in the presence of those who soon after revenged me, as well as many more that had been used by him with barbarity. Therefore no prince, nor lord, however potent, should laugh at the Divine vengeance; which was the case with many of those who most cruelly outraged

me, as I shall inform the reader in due time. I do not write this narrative of my adventures from a motive of vanity, but merely to return thanks to God, who has extricated me out of so many trials and difficulties; who likewise delivers me from those that daily impend over me. Upon all occasions I pay my devotions to him; call upon him as my defender, and recommend myself to his care. I always exert my utmost efforts to extricate myself; but when I am quite at a loss, and all my powers fail me, then the force of the Deity displays itself—that formidable force which unexpectedly strikes those who wrong and oppress others, and neglect the great and honourable duty which God has enjoined them.

Upon my return to my inn I found that the duke had sent me several considerable presents of meats and wines. I ate heartily; and having mounted on horseback, bent my course towards Florence. On my arrival in that city I found my sister with six daughters, one of whom was marriageable, and one still in the nurse's arms. I likewise found her husband there, who, on account of a variety of accidents that had befallen him, no longer continued his business. I had, above a twelvemonth before, sent them jewels and French presents to the value of above two thousand ducats, and had then brought with me to the amount of a thousand crowns. Upon this occasion I discovered, that though I allowed them four gold crowns a month, they every day raised money upon my presents, which they were continually selling. My brother-in-law was a man of so much principle, that, for fear I should be angry with him, when the money I sent him for his support proved insufficient, he pawned all he had in the world, and borrowed upon the most exorbitant interest, purely to avoid meddling with money that was not intended for him. In consequence of this behaviour, I knew him to be a man of great virtue and integrity, conceived a greater desire to serve him than ever, and grew impatient to provide for all his little daughters before I left Florence.

CHAPTER XXXVII

The Duke of Florence happening to be about this time, which was the month of August, in the year 1545, at Poggio Cajano, a place ten miles distant from Florence, I waited on his excellency merely to compliment him, as I was a citizen of Florence, and as my ancestors had been very much attached to the House of Medici, but none of them more so than myself. I therefore repaired to Cajano, solely to pay my respects to the Duke Cosmo, for whom I had an affection, and not with an intention to make any stay. But, as God orders all things for the best, it was His Divine will that when the duke saw me, after receiving me with the greatest kindness, and profusely lavishing his caresses on me, both he and the duchess began to inquire about the different works that I had executed for the King of France. I gladly and readily gave them a circumstantial narrative of all I had done for that monarch. When the duke had heard me to an end, he said that he had been informed of the whole before, and that all I had related was true. He then exclaimed: "How ill have so many great and beautiful works been rewarded! My good friend Benvenuto, if you would do something for me, I would pay you far more satisfactorily than that king has done, upon whom you lavish your praises." I then replied that I had great obligations to his Majesty for delivering me from an unjust confinement, and afterwards giving me an opportunity of signalising myself by the most admirable performances that were ever done by any artificer. Whilst I expressed myself thus the duke made strange contortions, and seemed hardly to have patience to hear me out. As soon as I had ceased speaking, he said: "If you are willing to work for me, I will pay you in such a manner as will, perhaps, surprise you, provided I am pleased with your performance, as I make

no doubt but I shall be." I, like a poor, unfortunate creature as I was, being desirous of showing that since I left that admirable school, I had cultivated talents which he did not think of, answered the duke that I would gladly undertake to make a great statue of marble or bronze for his fine square at Florence. He replied that all he desired for a specimen was a Perseus. This he had for some time expressed a desire of having, and ordered me to make him a little model of one. Accordingly, in a few weeks I finished one about a cubit in length; it was made of yellow wax, and both ingenuity and labour were exerted in the execution.

The duke came to Florence, and, before I could have an opportunity of showing him this model, several days passed, during which he behaved as if he had never seen or known me, so that I began to think myself upon indifferent terms with his excellency. But having one day after dinner carried the model into his wardrobe, I found him with the duchess and some of the nobility; he no sooner saw it, but he was pleased with it, and praised it to excess, which made me in some measure hope that he would have a right idea of it. When he had sufficiently viewed it, his satisfaction was greatly increased, and he expressed himself to this effect: "My friend Benvenuto, if you were to make a great work according to this little model, it would surpass everything in the square." I then replied: "Most excellent sir, in the square of Florence are the works of the great Donatello, and the admirable Michael Angelo, the two greatest sculptors since the days of the ancients: your excellency therefore pays me a high compliment; for I will take upon me that the execution of the work shall be three times as masterly as that of the model." The duke, who maintained that he was a great connoisseur in these things, disputed the matter with me for a while, saying he knew exactly what could be done. I answered that my works would decide the contest, and put his excellency out of

all doubt, for I was sure of being able to exceed my promise. I at the same time desired he would afford me the means of carrying my design into execution, because without such assistance it would be impossible for me to perform my engagement. Upon which he bade me give in a written account of all I had occasion for, without omitting a single article, and he would take care I should be properly supplied. Certain it is that if I had been sufficiently cautious to make an agreement in writing for all that I had occasion for in my works, I should not have had half the trouble and perplexity which I brought upon myself by my own negligence; for the duke seemed to have a great desire to have works done, and to supply those employed in them: but I, not being aware that he intended to engage in great undertakings, proceeded in the most liberal manner with his excellency. I, however, made out the account in writing, which was answered with the greatest liberality imaginable: whereupon I said: "Most noble patron, contracts do not properly consist in verbal agreements or in such writings as this; all that is required is that I should keep my promise with your excellency. In case I succeed, I take it for granted you will remember me, and perform all that you have promised on your part." Upon my expressing myself thus, the duke was so highly pleased with my words and my behaviour, that both he and the duchess lavished upon me the most extraordinary compliments and caresses conceivable.

As I had a strong desire to set about my work directly, I told his excellency that I had occasion for a house in which I might conveniently set up my furnaces, and carry on a variety of works, both of clay and bronze, and of gold and silver separately; for I knew how likely he was to make use of me in the various branches of my business, and I could not conduct it without proper apartments for the purpose. I told him at the same time, that to convince his excellency how zealous I was

to serve him, I had already pitched upon a house that would answer my intentions, and with the situation of which I was highly pleased; but as I did not intend to trouble him for money or anything else till he had seen my performance, I had brought two jewels with me from France, with which I requested his excellency to purchase that house for me; and desired he would keep them in his possession till I had earned them by my labour. The workmanship of these jewels was exquisite, and done by my journeymen from my own designs. After having looked at them for a time, the duke expressed himself in these encouraging terms, which inspired me with the most flattering expectations: "Take your jewels again, Benvenuto, for it is you I want, and not them; you shall have the house you mention, without its costing you anything." He then wrote a line under my memorial, which I have ever since kept by me, and the purport of which is as follows: "Let the house be examined, and the price and title inquired into; for we intend it for Benvenuto."

When I read this order, I thought myself sure of the house, as I fancied that my works would not fail to give the highest satisfaction to my employer. His excellency at the same time gave express orders about the affair to his steward, named Pier Francesco Riccio (who was a native of Prato, and had formerly been tutor to the duke). I spoke to this fool of a fellow, and gave him an exact account of all I stood in need of; for I proposed to erect a shop on a piece of ground which was then laid out in a garden. The steward immediately employed a close, artful agent, whose name was Lattanzio Gorini. This was a little man, who seemed to crawl like a spider; had a feeble voice, resembling that of a gnat; and was as slow as a snail in his motions. He caused such a small quantity of stones, sand, and mortar to be brought to the spot, as would scarcely have made a pigeon-house. Perceiving that things went on so ill, I began to be alarmed; I how-

ever said within myself, little beginnings sometimes lead to a great end. I likewise conceived some hopes from seeing how many thousand ducats the duke had squandered away upon some little ordinary works of sculpture, done by the stupid Baccio Bandinello. So, rallying my spirits as well as I could, I did my utmost to stimulate Lattanzio; and the better to excite him, I employed some other mean fellows, that had an influence over him, to remind him of his duty; but it was like talking to lame asses, with a blind man for their guide. Although I had so many difficulties to encounter, I, with my own money, caused a place to be marked out for a shop; ordering vines and other trees to be plucked up by the roots, with my usual ardour, and even with a degree of fury. At the same time I employed one Tasso, a carpenter, who was my intimate friend, and got him to make certain props and supports of wood, that I might begin my great statue of Perseus. This Tasso was an excellent workman—I do not think he was ever equalled in his business; he was also remarkably facetious and merry, for every time I went to him, he came up to me smiling, singing some ballad or other. I was by this time half desperate, as well from having heard that my affairs were in a very untoward situation in France, as because I had but little hopes from my employers here, on account of their coldness. I constantly put a constraint upon myself, to hear one half of my carpenter's ballad; but at last I grew cheerful in his company, making an effort to dispel some of my melancholy and desponding thoughts.

I had now given proper directions concerning all the things above mentioned, and began to hurry the workmen on, that I might the sooner prepare for my great undertaking. Already part of the mortar had been used, when I was sent for by the duke's steward; upon which I instantly repaired to him, and found him, just after the duke had dined, in the hall of the palace where the clock stood. As I approached him with respect, he, with great

rudeness and asperity, asked me who had put me in possession of that house, and by what authority I had begun to build there, adding that he was quite surprised at my boldness and presumption. I answered that I had been put in possession of the house by his excellency, who had upon the occasion employed one Lattanzio Gorini as his agent; that the said Lattanzio had caused stones, sand, and mortar to be carried to the house, and had supplied me with all that I wanted. I added that for all this I had received his own order, though he questioned me about my authority. When I had expressed myself in this manner, the vile fellow flew into a more violent passion than at first, and told me that neither I nor any of those I mentioned had spoken the truth. This behaviour at last provoked my resentment, and I replied to him in these terms: "Mr. steward, so long as you speak in a manner agreeable to the dignity of your character, I shall have a due regard for you, and address you with the same respect that I do the duke himself; but in case you behave otherwise, I shall speak to you only as Francesco Riccio." Hereupon the old man flew into such a passion that I thought he would instantly have been deprived of his senses: he told me, with much opprobrious language, that he was surprised he should condescend so far as to speak to such a person as I was. At these words I was incensed with the highest indignation, and said: "Hear me a word or two, Francesco Riccio, and I will tell you who are my equals, and who are yours; yours are pedagogues that teach children to read." The old man thereupon, with a countenance quite inflamed with choler, raised his voice, and repeated the very same words as before. I began in my turn to look big, and assuming somewhat to myself, told him that such men as I were worthy of speaking to popes, emperors, and mighty monarchs; that there were perhaps but one such as I in the world, whereas there were dozens such as he to be met with in every corner. When he heard this he went up

towards a window in the hall, and desired me to repeat my words once more; I accordingly repeated them more boldly than at first, adding that I no longer wished to serve the duke, and that I would go back to France, where I was sure of being welcome. The fool remained quite thunderstruck, and as pale as ashes, while I went off in a violent passion, with a resolution to leave the place; and would to God I had put my design into execution. The duke certainly did not immediately hear of this broil, for I stayed a few days, having laid aside all thoughts of Florence, except so far as related to my sister and my nieces, whom I provided for as well as I could with what little money I had left. I was then for returning to France, without any inclination ever to see Italy again, being resolved to go off with all possible expedition, and that without taking my leave of the duke, or anybody else whomsoever.

One morning the steward sent for me of his own accord, and began with an air of great civility to make a long pedantic oration, in which I could perceive neither method, meaning, head, or tail; all I could gather from it was, that as he professed himself to be a Christian, he did not care to harbour malice against any man, and now he asked me in the duke's name what salary I required for my support. I thereupon continued for a time wrapt in meditation, without returning any answer, and the reason was that I did not intend to stay at Florence. Perceiving that I did not answer immediately, he carried his complaisance so far as to say: "Benvenuto, a duke is worthy of an answer: what I say to you is by the duke's orders." I then replied, and desired him to tell his excellency that I could by no means submit to be below any of those of my profession whom he had at his court. The steward immediately said: "Bandinello has a pension of two hundred crowns a year; so that if that sum will satisfy you, your salary is fixed." I told him it would, and if I deserved anything over, it might be given me after my

works had been seen, and should be left entirely to his excellency's judgment and pleasure. Thus did I against my inclination once more engage in this service, and begin to work. The duke every day lavished new favours on me, and treated me with the greatest kindness conceivable.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

By this time I had received several letters from France, from my faithful friend Signor Guido Guidi; but none of these letters had brought any bad news. Ascanio himself wrote to me from time to time, desiring me to consult my inclination without reserve, and assuring me that if anything happened he would take care to apprise me of it. The king was informed that I had entered into the service of the Duke of Florence, and as he was the best-natured prince in the whole world, he often said: "Why does not Benvenuto return?" Having inquired in a particular manner of my two young men, they both told him that I had often written that I was greatly encouraged and very happy where I was, and that they did not apprehend I should ever come back to serve his Majesty. The king, highly incensed upon hearing these disrespectful words, which never came from me, replied: "Since he has quitted my service without any cause, I will never again inquire after him; so he may stay where he is." Thus these villains and assassins brought affairs to the crisis they desired; for in case I had returned to France, they must again have become my journeymen and dependants as at first; but they thought that if I never returned they should be their own masters, and have all my business: hence it was that they exerted themselves to the utmost to prevent my return.

Whilst I was getting my shop erected, in order to begin the statue of Perseus, I worked in a room on the ground

floor, in which I made a model of that statue in plaster, of the intended size of the work, to which I meant to conform. When I found that this method was likely to prove somewhat tedious, I had recourse to another expedient; for by this time I had a shop erected of bricks piled one upon another in so miserable a manner that the very remembrance of it makes me uneasy. I began the arrangement of the frame, or rather the figure of the Medusa, and made the skeleton of iron. I afterwards made the figure of clay, and when I had done this, I baked it hard by the fire, with the assistance of some of my little apprentices, one of whom was a boy of extraordinary beauty, son to a woman named Gambetta. I kept this child with a view of drawing his likeness (for there are no books that teach this art like Nature herself), and I inquired about for journeymen in order to despatch the work the sooner; but I could find none, and it was morally impossible for me to execute the work myself in all its branches. There were some in Florence who would willingly have entered into my service, but Bandinello found means to prevent them. Not satisfied with thus distressing me, he told the duke that I endeavoured to decoy his workmen, because I could never of myself contrive to put a great figure together. I complained to the duke of the ill offices done me by this fool, and begged he would procure me some journeymen to assist me. These words made the duke believe what was told him by Bandinello: perceiving this, I resolved to do the best I could by myself, and fell to work under the greatest difficulties conceivable. Whilst I laboured in this manner night and day, my sister's husband was taken ill, and died in a few days. He left to my care his wife, who was a young woman with six daughters, some of them grown up, and some very little: this was the first great trouble I had in Florence, to be left father and guardian of a whole afflicted and disconsolate family. Desirous, however, of carrying on my business in the best way I could, and seeing my garden full of dirt, I sent for two

workmen, who were brought to me from the Old Bridge; one of these was an old man of seventy, the other a stripling of eighteen. When they had been with me about three days, the young workman told me that the old fellow would not work, and advised me to turn him off, for he was not only idle himself, but the cause of idleness in others, hindering him from minding his business; he added that the little there was to be done he was able to do himself, and there was no occasion for my throwing away my money. When I saw him so well disposed to work I asked him whether he was willing to live with me as my servant, and we soon agreed. The young man, whose name was Bernardino Mannellini of Mugello, took care of my horse, worked in the garden, and even endeavoured to assist me in the shop; at last he began to learn the art so well that I never in my life had a better servant. Resolving, therefore, to do the whole business by his assistance, I began to convince the duke that Bandinello was a liar, and that I could do very well without the assistance of his journeymen.

I was about this time troubled with a pain in my back, and being unable to work, was glad to pass my time in the duke's wardrobe with two young goldsmiths, whose names were Giovan Paolo and Domenico Poggini, whom I set to make a little golden vase, wrought with a basso-rilievo of figures and other ornaments: this belonged to the duchess, and her excellency had it made to drink water out of. She likewise desired me to make her a golden girdle, and moreover to adorn this work with jewels and many pretty inventions of figures and other things of that kind, which was done accordingly. The duke came from time to time to the wardrobe, and took great pleasure in seeing work carried on, and in talking to me about it. When I found myself somewhat recovered of the pain I caused clay to be brought me, and while thus occupied, I took his likeness, making much bigger than the life. His excel-

pleased with this work, and conceived so great a liking to me that he told me it would be highly agreeable to him if I would work at his palace, and he would look out for apartments of a proper size for me, which I might have fitted up with furnaces, and whatever else I had occasion for, as he took the highest delight in such things. I told his excellency that it was impossible, for I should not then finish my work in a hundred years.

The duchess was lavish of her caresses to me, and would gladly have had me work for her alone, and neglect the statue of Perseus and everything else. I, who saw myself possessed of this vain shadow of favour, knew to a certainty that my inauspicious star could not long bear to see me happy, and would soon involve me in new perplexities; for every moment I had present to my thoughts the great injury I had done myself in endeavouring to better my condition. I speak with regard to my affairs in France. The king could not digest the mortification which my departure had occasioned him; and yet he would have been glad of my return, but would have me look upon it as an obligation. I thought, however, that I had many good reasons to decline making any submission; for I apprehended that had I descended so low as to serve the French again with humility and complaisance, they would have said that I knew myself to be in fault, and would have given credit to certain calumnies that were invented against me. I therefore stood upon the punctilio of honour, and wrote to France like a man that knew himself to be in the right. This conduct of mine was highly agreeable to my two young disciples; for in my letters to them I boasted of the many works I was employed in by two great personages, who were the absolute masters in the city of Florence, where I drew my first breath. As soon as they had received this intelligence they repaired to the king, and persuaded his Majesty to make over to them my castle, in the same manner he had granted it to me. The king, who was a prince of great generosity and honour,

would never comply with the presumptuous demands of these two young villains, for he began to perceive the malicious tendency of their application. However, that he might seem to afford them some faint hopes, and induce me to return quickly, he caused a treasurer of his, named Giuliano Buonaccorsi, a citizen of Florence, to write to me in a style somewhat angry; the purport of the letter was, that if I desired to retain that reputation of a man of honour, which I had before enjoyed, as I had quitted the kingdom without any cause, I should give an account of all I had done for his Majesty.

Upon the receipt of this letter I was so highly pleased that I could not have wished for one couched in terms more to my mind. When I sat down to write, I filled nine sheets of common paper, and in these I minuted all the works that I had been concerned in, with the several accidents that had befallen me in the prosecution of those undertakings, and all the money expended on them, which was paid by two clerks, and one of the king's treasurers, and signed by the different persons through whose hands it had passed, some of whom had contributed their property, and others their labour. I added that I had not pocketed a single farthing of the money, and that when I had finished my work I was not in the least a gainer; that I had carried with me to Italy only a few favours and promises, truly worthy of his Majesty; and though I could not boast of having acquired by my works anything more than certain salaries settled upon me by his Majesty for my support, and there remained above seven hundred crowns of my salary still due, which I never touched, but left behind me in France, that they might be remitted me to defray the charges of my return; yet as I had discovered that ill offices had been done me by certain malevolent persons, excited thereto by envy (though the truth will always be prevalent), I appealed to his most Christian Majesty. "I am not excited," said I, "by avarice: I am conscious of having done for your Majesty more than

ever I engaged to perform, and I have never received the promised reward. I desire nothing more in this world than to remain in the opinion of your Majesty a man of a fair and unblemished character, such as I have always shown myself; and if your Majesty retains the smallest doubt of my integrity, I will, upon your signifying the least desire of it, return to France to give an account of my conduct at the hazard of my life. But, as I saw myself held in so little consideration, I did not care to make a new offer of my services, being sensible that I can earn a livelihood in any part of the world; and whenever I am written to, I shall send a proper answer." There were in that letter several other particulars worthy of so great a monarch, and tending to vindicate my honour. Before I sent it away, I carried it to the duke, who was highly pleased with the perusal; I then put it in the post-office, directed to the Cardinal of Ferrara.

About this time Bernardone Baldini, who was employed by his excellency as broker in the jewelling business, had brought with him from Venice a large diamond of above thirty-five carats. He had with him Antonio di Vittorio Landi, whose interest it likewise was to prevail on the duke to purchase it. This diamond had its upper face terminating in a point; but, as it did not appear to have the lustre required in a jewel of that sort, the owner got the point made flat, which greatly spoiled the beauty of the stone. Our duke, who was passionately fond of jewels, held out to that rogue Bernardone some hopes that he would purchase the diamond; and as the fellow was desirous of having solely to himself the honour of putting a trick upon the Duke of Florence, he never spoke a word of the affair to his partner Antonio Landi. This Antonio had been intimate with me ever since we were boys, and as he saw I was so familiar with the duke, he one day called me aside (it was then about noon, and this happened near the new market), and spoke to me thus: "Benvenuto, I know full well that the duke will

show you a diamond which he seems to be desirous of purchasing. You will see a very fine stone: endeavour to promote the sale of it; I could sell it for seventeen thousand crowns. I am positive his excellency will ask your advice, and it is very possible he may purchase it." In short, Antonio was very sanguine in his expectations of being a great gainer by this diamond. I promised that in case it should be shown to me, and my opinion should be asked, I would speak of it to the best of my judgment, without saying anything to depreciate its value. The duke, as I have observed above, came every day into my workshop, and stayed there several hours. Somewhat above a week from the day that Antonio Landi had the above conversation with me, his excellency showed me the diamond in question one day after dinner. I knew it by the tokens given me by Antonio Landi, with regard both to its form and its weight; and because, as I have observed above, this diamond was of a water somewhat obscure, and they had upon that account furbished it up anew, I seeing of what sort it was, would certainly have advised the duke not to purchase it. Therefore, when his excellency showed it me, I asked him what he would have me say of it, as jewellers had two different methods of appreciating a jewel, one after a great man had bought it, and another in order to excite him to be a purchaser. The duke told me that he had bought it, and only wanted to know my opinion concerning it: I thereupon declared my sentiments of the diamond to the best of my judgment. He desired me to consider well the beauty of the great streaks in it. I made answer that his excellency was quite mistaken in considering that as a beauty, for it was nothing else but a flattened point. Upon my uttering these words, the duke, who perceived that what I said was true, with a look of great displeasure bade me examine the jewel carefully, and give my opinion concerning its value. I imagined that as Antonio Landi had valued it at seventeen thousand crowns, the duke

might have given at most fifteen thousand for it; and, therefore, as I saw that he was offended at my speaking the truth, I thought it advisable to favour his mistake, and so returning him the diamond, said, "It cost you eighteen thousand crowns." Upon my speaking thus, he made an exclamation of surprise—an Oh! with a mouth as wide as a draw-well, and said, "Surely you can be no connoisseur in jewels." I answered, "My lord, you are mistaken; endeavour to continue in a good humour with your diamond, and I will endeavour to understand these things better: at least be so good as to let me know how much it cost you, that I may the better enter into your excellency's method of purchasing these things." The duke thereupon said to me with a sneer, "It cost five-and-twenty thousand crowns and upwards," and so went away.

During this conversation were present Giovan Paolo and Domenico Poggini, both goldsmiths; and Bachiacca the embroiderer, who worked in the next apartment, ran to us upon hearing it. I then said that I would not have advised him against purchasing it, but that Antonio Landi had a week before offered it to me for seventeen thousand crowns; and I apprehended that I might have bought it for fifteen thousand and less; but the duke was resolved to keep up the reputation of his jewel at any rate. However, as Antonio Landi had set so inconsiderable a value upon it, I thought it was shocking, nay, I could hardly believe it possible, that Bernardone should have so grossly imposed upon the duke. Yet, hardly thinking it could be true, I took no further notice of the affair, but smiled at the good prince's simplicity.

Having already sketched the figure of the great Medusa, as I have observed above, I made the skeleton of iron, then forming the figure of earth about half an inch thick, I caused it to be well baked, and over it I put a covering of wax in order to finish it completely in the manner it was intended to remain. The duke, who came several

times to see me, was greatly afraid at its not being of bronze, and would have had me send for some master to cast it.

His excellency was constantly speaking in the most advantageous terms of my genius and skill, while his steward was as constantly watching for some opportunity to hurt me. This man, though a native of Prato, the natural enemy of our state, was by a surprising turn of fortune, only because he had been the pedagogue of Duke Cosmo de' Medici, invested with a command over the city-guards and all the public offices in Florence. As I before observed, he was always upon the watch to do me some injury, but found it a very difficult matter to ruin me with any probability of success: he at last thought of a sure way to ruin me, by bribing the mother of my young apprentice (whose name was Cencio, as hers was Gambetta), to charge me with a horrible crime, in hopes that the fear of a prosecution would induce me to leave the city. But having convinced them by my determined conduct that I was not to be so easily intimidated, I thrust them out of my house, and at once put an end to their hopes from this infamous project.

CHAPTER XXXIX

HAVING reflected maturely on the villainy as well as power of that wicked pedagogue, I thought it most advisable to keep for a time out of the way of such diabolical machinations; so in the morning early I put into the hands of my sister jewels and effects to the value of nearly two thousand crowns, and mounting on horseback, bent my course towards Venice, carrying with me my journeyman Bernardino di Mugello. Upon my arrival at Ferrara, I wrote to his excellency the duke, that as I had left Florence without taking leave of him, I would return without being sent for.

When I came to Venice, I reflected upon the variety of means by which my adverse fortune persecuted me, but as I found myself in good health and spirits, I resolved to struggle with it as usual. Thus I passed my time very agreeably in that beautiful and opulent city, where I visited the great painter Titian, and Signor Jacopo Sansovino, an excellent sculptor and architect of Florence, who had a considerable pension from the senate of Venice. As we had been acquainted in our youth both at Rome and Florence, I was highly caressed by these two ingenious artists. The day following I met Signor Lorenzino de' Medici, who took me by the hand, and received me with the greatest affection imaginable. We had known one another in Florence, when I was concerned in stamping coins for Duke Alessandro, and afterwards at Paris, when I was in the service of the King of France. He had resided at the house of Signor Giuliano Buonaccorsi; and because he did not know where else to go for amusement, without running a considerable risk, he passed a great deal of his time at my house, in observing the process of the great works above mentioned. On account, therefore, of our former acquaintance, he took me by the hand, and carried me with him to his own house, where was the Prior degli Strozzi, brother to Signor Piero; they were very merry, and asked me how long I proposed staying at Venice, thinking that I intended to return to France. I told them the affair that had made me quit Florence, and added that I proposed returning to that city in two or three days, to enter again into the service of my sovereign the grand duke. When I had expressed myself thus, the prior and Signor Lorenzino looked so sternly at me that I was quite disconcerted: they then said: "You would act much more wisely in returning to France, where you have both money and friends; if you go back to Florence, you will lose all your interest in France, and at Florence you will only meet with disgust and disappointment." I made them no answer, but set

out the next day with all possible secrecy, taking the road to Florence.

In the meantime the diabolical plot that had been hatched against me was pretty well over, for I had written the duke a full account of the affair, and the reason of my having gone to Venice. I waited on him without any ceremony; and though he discovered some displeasure at first, he at last turned to me with a placid countenance, and asked me where I had been. I made answer that my heart had always been with his excellency, though a certain troublesome affair had obliged me to ramble for a while. His good humour growing upon him, he desired me to give him some account of Venice; so we entered into conversation for a while, till at last he bid me mind my work, and finish the statue of Perseus. I returned to my house in high spirits, which caused great joy to my family—that is, to my sister and her six daughters. I then resumed my work, and continued it with all possible expedition.

The first thing I cast in bronze was the great head of his excellency in my workshop, when I had the pain in my back, which has been mentioned above. This work gave high satisfaction, and I made it with no other view than to try the clay used in casting bronze; and though I perceived that the admirable Donatello had cast his works in bronze with the clay of Florence, it appeared to me that he had great difficulties to struggle with. Thinking, therefore, that this proceeded from the ill condition of the clay, before I set about casting my Perseus, I chose to make these previous experiments, by which I found the clay to be good, though the nature of it was not understood by the great Donatello, for I observed he had been under great difficulties in finishing his pieces. Thus did I contrive by great art to make a compound clay, which was of infinite service to me: with this I cast the head; but as I had not yet made a furnace, I used that of Signor Zanobi di Pagno, a bell founder; and seeing that the head had come out very exact, I immediately set about making a little furnace in

the shop, which the duke had caused to be erected according to my own plan, in the house he had granted me. After making the furnace with all possible expedition, I commenced casting the statue of Medusa, that distorted female figure which is now seen under the feet of Perseus: and as this was a matter of great difficulty, I found it necessary to make use of all the precautions I had learnt, to avoid committing any blunder. Thus had I the most complete success at the first time of my casting in this furnace, and the bronze came out of it so neat and clean that my friends did not think I should have occasion to retouch it. There are German and French artists who boast of admirable secrets, which, they say, enable them to cast bronze without being obliged to clean it afterwards; but this is an absurd pretension; for after the bronze is cast, it is necessary to clean and furbish it up with hammers and chisels, as the great artists of antiquity did formerly, and as modern sculptors have done likewise—I mean such of the moderns as understand the art of working in bronze.

This work highly pleased the duke, who came to see it at my house, and encouraged me to exert myself; but the unquenchable envy of Bandinello had such power, for he was constantly misrepresenting me to his excellency, as to persuade him that, though I cast some of those figures, I should never be able to put the whole of them together, because I was quite a novice in the art, and his excellency should take care how he threw away his money. These words had such an effect upon my noble employer that part of the money allowed me for journeymen was retrenched, insomuch that I found myself under a necessity of coming to an explanation with his excellency. One morning I took occasion to wait his coming, in the Via de' Servi, and addressed him in these terms: "My lord, I am not assisted in my business as my occasions require: I therefore begin to suspect that your excellency doubts my being able to perform my promise; yet I must repeat it to you again, that I desire to finish the work in a

manner far more masterly than the model, as I have already promised." Having thus explained my mind to his excellency, when I perceived that all I said had no effect upon him, as he returned no answer, I immediately conceived such resentment and fell into so violent a passion that I again addressed the duke, saying, "My lord, this city has been indeed the school of every ingenious art; but as soon as a person has made himself known and learnt something, if he desires to be a credit to his country and his illustrious prince, he would do well to seek for work elsewhere. I am convinced, my lord, that this is true: I know that your excellency has been acquainted with Donatello and Leonardo da Vinci, and at present is so with the admirable Michael Angelo Buonarroti; men who by their genius add greatly to your excellency's glory and renown. I also hope that I shall contribute my share towards it; therefore, my good lord, suffer me to depart. But take care never to let Bandinello move from hence; rather let him have greater supplies than he requires of you; for if he should go abroad, so great is his presumption and ignorance, that he would probably bring this illustrious school into discredit. Dismiss me then, my lord: the only reward I desire for my past labours is your excellency's good will."

The duke, seeing me thus resolute, turned to me with some emotion, and said, "Benvenuto, if you are willing to finish the work, you shall want no assistance." I made answer that I desired nothing more than to show those detractors of my reputation that I had a spirit to perform my promise. Having left his excellency, I received some little assistance; but found myself under a necessity of opening my purse, as I was desirous that my work should go on pretty briskly. In the evening I often went to his excellency's wardrobe, where Domenico and Giovanni Poggini his brother were at work upon a golden vase for the duchess, of which mention has already been made, and upon a golden girdle. His excellency likewise caused a

little model to be made of a pendant, in which was to be set that great diamond which Bernardone and Antonio Landi persuaded him to purchase; and though it was what I should willingly have declined, the duke used such insinuations and arguments, that he used to prevail upon me to work there till ten o'clock at night, and by the same alluring arts would have fain persuaded me to work also by day. This I could never consent to, for which I at last thought that his excellency was angry with me. As I happened one day to come a little later than usual, the duke said to me, "You are *malvenuto*." I answered, "My lord, that is not my name, for I am called Benvenuto; and as I apprehend that your excellency jests with me, I shall say nothing more." The duke replied that he was not in jest, but quite in earnest, adding that he advised me to take care how I behaved, for it had come to his knowledge that I had availed myself of his favour to presume rather too much. I requested his excellency to name a man that I had ever wronged. He immediately flew into a passion and said: "Go and restore what you have had from Bernardone: that is one man you have wronged." I answered: "My lord, I thank you, and beg you would just hear me say four words in my defence: it is true he lent me a pair of old scales, two anvils, and three little hammers, which goods I, fifteen days ago, desired his agent Giorgio da Cortona to send for, whereupon Giorgio came for them himself. If your excellency, upon inquiry and sifting the evidence on both sides, finds that I ever had anything else from any person either in Rome or France, punish me with the utmost severity."

The duke, seeing me very warm, became quite mild and gentle, and said that those who have not done amiss should not be reprimanded; so that, if the case were as I represented it, I should continue to be as much in favour with him as ever. I then answered: "The knaveries of Bernardone force me to request and entreat your excellency to tell me sincerely what you gave for the great

diamond with the flattened point; for I hope to make you sensible of this rogue's motive for doing me ill offices with your excellency." The duke replied: "The diamond cost me twenty-five thousand crowns: why do you ask?" I told him: "Because, my lord, on such a day, and at such an hour, Antonio di Vittorio Landi, speaking to me of this diamond, valued it at seventeen thousand crowns. Your excellency now knows what sort of a bargain you have had; and for the truth of what I say, I appeal to Domenico Poggini and Giovan Paolo, his brother, who are here present, for I immediately apprised them of the affair; but since that I have never said a word more about it, because your excellency told me that I did not understand jewels, which made me think you had a mind to keep up the reputation of your purchase. Be assured, my lord, that I do understand jewels, and that I profess myself a man of principle, and of as much honour as any person living. I shall never attempt to rob you of eight or ten thousand crowns at a time, but rather try to earn them. I agreed to serve your excellency as a sculptor, a goldsmith, a stamper of coins, but never as a talebearer, nor do I wish the fourth part of the fine due to an informer. What I say to you at present is in my own defence, and in the presence of several persons of worth, that your excellency may no longer believe what is said by Bernardone." The duke thereupon fell into a passion, and sent for Bernardone, who was obliged to fly to Venice, and Antonio Landi with him. When they returned from Venice, Antonio said that the diamond sold to the duke was not the one he showed me in the market-place. I again waited on his excellency, and said to him: "My lord, all I told you is true, and all that Bernardone mentioned concerning the goods I borrowed is false, and you would do well to examine the affair to the bottom, and I will go to give order to the city-guard." Upon my expressing myself thus, the duke turned about to me, and said: "Benvenuto, live like a man of honour, and fear

nothing." The affair ended here, and I never said another word concerning it.

I set about finishing the jewel, and, when I had done it I carried it to the duchess, who told me she set as high a value upon my work as upon the diamond which Bernardone had made the duke purchase. She then desired me to fasten it to her breast with my own hand; and upon her giving me a large pin, I pinned it on, and departed very much in her good graces. I afterwards heard they caused it to be set again by a German, or some other foreigner, because Bernardone had said that the simplest manner of setting it was best. Domenico and Giovan Paolo Poggini, goldsmiths and brothers, worked, as I think I have already informed the reader, in his excellency's wardrobe, after my designs, upon certain little cases of gold and silver, chased with historical figures in basso rilievo, and other things of importance. I one day took occasion to say to the duke: "My lord, if you would enable me to keep several journeymen I would stamp the coins in your mint, as likewise medals of your excellency, in which I should rival if not surpass those of the ancients; for since I was employed in making medals for Pope Clement the Seventh, I have improved so considerably in this art that I come much nearer to perfection than I did at that time; I am even able to surpass the coins which I stamped for Duke Alessandro, though they are still looked upon as very fine. I would likewise make great vases of gold for you, as I did for the great King Francis the First, who afforded me all manner of assistance in my business, and I never lost my time either in making colossuses or other statues." To this the duke replied: "Work, Benvenuto, and I will take care to see you properly supplied." Yet he never gave me any assistance, or supplied me with conveniences for working.

One day his excellency sent me several pounds of fine silver, and said that it was from his silver mines, desiring me to make him a beautiful cup with it. As I did not

choose to neglect my Perseus, and yet had a great desire to serve the duke, I put it into the hands of a fellow called Pier de Martini, the goldsmith, together with my designs and models in wax. He set about it most awkwardly, and did not go on with it, so that I lost more time by employing him than if I had undertaken it myself. Having been thus plagued and disappointed for several months, when I saw that Pier would neither work at it himself nor get others to do it, I made him return it; and it was with great difficulty I could get back the body of the vase, which, as I have observed above, was unskilfully begun, and the remainder of the silver which I had put into his hands. The duke having heard something of the affair, sent for the vase and the models, without ever telling me why or wherefore. He, however, from my designs, got people to work for him at Venice and other places, but was extremely ill served. The duchess was incessantly requesting me to work for her in the jewelling way: to this I as constantly answered that it was well known to all the world in general, and to all Italy in particular, that I was a master of the jeweller's business, but that Italy had not hitherto seen a piece of sculpture of my workmanship; and that several sculptors, provoked at my vying with them, called me in derision the upstart sculptor: however, I hoped to show them that I had the skill of an old and experienced sculptor, if God should so far indulge me, as to enable me to exhibit my statue of Perseus in his excellency's grand square. So I went home, worked hard both day and night, and no more made my appearance at the palace. But that I might not be entirely deprived of the duchess's favour, I got certain little vases of silver made for her, about the size of a little twopenny pot, adorned with fine figures in the antique taste. Upon my carrying her these little vases, she gave me the kindest reception imaginable, and paid me for the gold and silver that I had used in making them. At the same time I solicited her excellency's interest, and begged she would

inform the duke that I was not properly assisted in my great work; and that she would likewise advise him to be upon his guard against the malicious insinuations of Bandinello, by which he hindered me from finishing my Perseus. Upon my expressing myself thus in a plaintive tone, the duchess shrugging her shoulders, exclaimed, "Sure the duke should by this time know what a worthless fellow that Bandinello is!"

CHAPTER XL

I NOW stayed almost constantly at home, and hardly ever went to the ducal palace, but worked with the utmost assiduity to finish my statue. I was obliged to pay my workmen out of my own pocket; for the duke, having caused them to be paid for me by Lattanzio Gorini about eighteen months, at last grew tired of it, and ordered payment to be stopped. I thereupon asked Lattanzio why he did not pay my men as usual. He answered with the shrill voice of a gnat, and using some odd, fantastic gestures with his spider's hands, "Why don't you get your work finished? It is the general opinion that you will never finish it." I answered him passionately, uttering horrid imprecations against him, and all those that thought I should not complete it. Thus in deep despair I returned home to my unfortunate statue of Perseus, not without shedding tears; for I could not help recollecting the flourishing state in which I had lived in Paris, when in the service of the munificent King Francis, by whom I was abundantly supplied with everything; whereas here I was hardly supplied at all. This consideration had such an effect upon me that I was several times upon the point of forming a desperate resolution to leave the place abruptly.

Once, in particular, I mounted a little nag, and taking a hundred crowns with me, set out for Fiesole, to see a

natural son whom I had at nurse with a gossip of mine, wife to one of my journeymen. I found the child in good health; and though I was greatly dejected, and uneasy in my mind, I embraced him. When I was for departing, he would not let me go, but held me fast with his little hands, at the same time crying and screaming so loud that it was something surprising in an infant not above two years old. However, as I had formed a resolution in case I could meet with Bandinello, who went every evening to visit his farm above St. Domenico, to attack him, and punish his insolence, I disengaged myself from my child, regardless of his cries and sobs, and bent my course towards Florence. Just as I arrived at the square of St. Domenico, Bandinello entering it on the other side, I came up to him with a full resolution to take a sanguinary vengeance upon the spot. I overtook him, and saw him upon a little mule, which appeared no bigger than an ass, quite unarmed; and he had with him a boy about ten years of age. As soon as he perceived me he turned as pale as death, and trembled all over. I, who knew what a cowardly wretch he was, cried out to him: "Fear nothing, vile poltroon, I do not think you worth striking." He gave me a look of the most abject pusillanimity, and returned no answer. I thereupon resumed just and virtuous sentiments, and returned thanks to the Almighty for preventing me from perpetrating the rash action I intended. Being in this manner delivered from the diabolical frenzy by which I had been agitated, I recovered my spirits, and said within myself: "If God should be so favourable to me as to enable me to finish my work, I hope thereby to kill all my enemies, and wreak a much greater and more glorious vengeance than if I had satiated my fury upon one alone." So with this good resolution I returned home, somewhat easier in my mind.

In three days' time I received information that the nurse had accidentally smothered my only son, which occasioned me as poignant a grief as ever I had felt.

Hearing the news, I fell upon my knees, and returned thanks to God with a profusion of tears, according to my custom, saying, "Lord, Thou gavest that infant to me, and now Thou hast deprived me of him: for all Thou hast done I return thanks to Thy Divine Majesty." Thus, though the excess of my grief had quite disconcerted and confounded me, I made a virtue of necessity, and comforted myself as well as I could.

About this time a young man had quitted Bandinello's service, whose name was Francesco, son to Matteo Fabbro: this young man applied to me for work, and I readily employed him to clean the statue of Medusa, which was already cast. The same person, about a fortnight after, told me that his master, meaning Bandinello, had desired him to tell me that if I were willing to make a marble statue he would furnish me with a fine block. I instantly answered: "Tell him I accept his offer, and it may prove an unlucky piece of marble for him, for he is always provoking me and does not remember what passed between us upon the square of St. Domenico. Let him know I insist upon having the marble by all means. I never speak ill of him, while he is always backbiting and traducing me; nay, I verily believe that your coming to work with me was a mere pretext, and that in fact you were sent by him to be a spy upon my conduct. So go and tell him I will have the marble in spite of him, and you may return again to his service."

As I had not for several days made my appearance at the ducal palace, I went thither one morning through a sudden caprice, and the duke had just done dinner when I entered. I was afterwards given to understand the duke had that morning spoken much of me, and in terms highly advantageous to my character; in particular, he had extolled me highly for my masterly manner of setting jewels. When the duchess saw me, she sent Signor Sforza to call me, and upon my presenting myself before her excellency, she requested me to set a little rose

diamond for her in a ring, adding that she intended to wear it constantly. She gave me the measure of her finger, together with the diamond, which was worth about a hundred crowns, and begged I would be as expeditious as possible. The duke thereupon said to the duchess: "It must be acknowledged that Benvenuto was formerly unrivalled in this branch; but now that he has dropped it, I apprehend it would be too much trouble for him to make such a ring as you require. Therefore I beg you would not break in upon his time with this trifling affair, which is now so much out of his way." I returned the duke thanks for his obliging speech, and requested him to let me do the duchess this little piece of service; so I undertook the work, and finished it in a few days. The ring was intended for the little finger. I therefore made four small figures of boys, with four little grotesques, which completed the ring, and I added to it a few fruits and ligatures in enamel, so that the jewel and the ring appeared admirably suited to each other. I carried it directly to the duchess, who told me in the most obliging manner that I had acquitted myself extremely well, and that she would not forget me. This ring she sent as a present to King Philip; and afterwards was constantly employing me in one work or other; but in so complaisant and obliging a manner, that I always exerted myself to the utmost to serve her, though I saw but very little of her money. And yet, Heaven knows, I wanted money very much; for I earnestly desired to finish my Perseus, and I had found some young men to assist me, whom I had paid out of my own pocket. I then began to make my appearance at court more frequently than I had done for some time past.

One holiday I went to the palace immediately after dinner, and entering the hall in which the great clock stands, I saw the door of the wardrobe open. As I presented myself, the duke beckoned to me, and with great complaisance addressed me thus: "You are welcome to

court (alluding to my name of Benvenuto); take this little chest, which was sent me as a present by Signor Stefano, of Palestrina; open it, and let us see what it contains." I instantly opened it, and answered the duke: "This, my lord, is the figure of a little boy, in Greek marble, and is indeed a very extraordinary piece. I don't remember ever having seen amongst the antiques so beautiful a performance, or one of so exquisite a taste; I therefore offer your excellency to restore its head, arms, and feet, and make an eagle for it, that it may be called a Ganymede; and though it is by no means proper for me to patch up old statues, as that is generally done by a sort of bunglers in the business, who acquit themselves very indifferently, the excellence of this great master is such that it powerfully excites me to do him this piece of service." The duke was highly pleased to find the figure had such merit, and asked me several questions about it. "Tell me," said he, "Benvenuto, in what precisely consists the extraordinary excellence of this great master, which excites in you such wonder and surprise?" I endeavoured as well as I could to give him an idea of the extraordinary beauty of the statue; of the great genius, skill, and admirable manner of the artist, conspicuous in his work; topics on which I enlarged a long time, and that with the greater earnestness, as I perceived that his excellency took pleasure in listening to me.

Whilst I amused him so agreeably with my conversation, a page happened to open the door of the wardrobe; and just as he came out Bandinello entered. The duke, seeing him, appeared to be in some disorder, and asked him, with a stern look, what he was about. Bandinello, without making any answer, immediately fixed his eye on the little chest, in which the above-mentioned statue was very plainly to be seen; then shaking his head, he turned to the duke, and said with a scornful sneer: "My lord, this is one of those things I have so often spoke to your excellency about. Depend upon it, the ancients knew

nothing of the anatomy of the parts, and for that reason their works abound with errors." I stood silent, and gave no attention to what he had advanced, but on the contrary turned my back to him. When the fool had made an end of his nonsensical harangue, the duke, addressing himself to me, said: "Benvenuto, this is quite the reverse of what you awhile ago so much boasted, and seemed to prove by so many specious arguments: so endeavour to defend your own cause." To these words of the duke, which were spoken with great mildness, I answered: "My lord, your excellency is to understand that Baccio Bandinello is a compound of everything that is bad, and so he has always been; insomuch that whatever he looks at, however superlatively good in itself, is, by his fascinating eyes, immediately converted into something supremely evil: but I who am inclined to good alone, see the truth through a happier medium; so that all I mentioned awhile ago to your excellency concerning that beautiful figure is strictly and literally true, and what Bandinello has said of it is purely the result of his own innate malevolence." The duke seemed to hear me with pleasure; and whilst I expressed myself thus, Bandinello writhed himself into a variety of contortions, and made his face, which was by nature very ugly, quite hideous by his frightful grimaces. Immediately the duke, quitting the hall, went down to the ground-floor apartments, and Bandinello after him; the gentlemen of the bedchamber, pulling me by the cloak, encouraged me to follow him; so we followed the duke till he sat himself down in one of the rooms, and Bandinello and I placed ourselves one on his right, the other on the left. I remained silent, and many of the duke's servants who stood round kept their eyes fixed on Bandinello, tittering when they recollected what I had said to him in the hall above. Bandinello again began to chatter, and said that, when he exhibited his Hercules and Cacus to the public, he really believed there were above a hundred lampoons

published against him, which contained all the vilest ribaldry that could enter into the imagination of the rabble. To this I answered: "My lord, when your great artist, Michael Angelo Buonarroti, exhibited his Sacristy, in which so many beautiful figures are to be seen, the members of the admirable school of Florence, which loves and encourages genius wherever it displays itself, published above a hundred sonnets, wherein they vied with each other which should praise him most: and as Bandinello deserved all the censure that was passed on his work, so Michael Angelo merited the highest encomiums that were bestowed on his performance."

Upon my expressing myself thus, Bandinello was incensed to such a degree that he was ready to burst with fury, and turning to me, said: "What faults have you to find with my statues?" I answered: "I will soon tell them, if you have but the patience to hear me." He replied: "Tell them, then." The duke and all present listened with the utmost attention. I began by premising that I was sorry to be obliged to lay before him all the blemishes of his work, and that I was not so properly delivering my own sentiments as declaring what was said of it by the ingenious school of Florence. However, as the fellow at one time said something disobliging, at another made some offensive gesture with his hands or his feet, he put me into such a passion that I behaved with a rudeness which I should otherwise have avoided.

"The ingenious school of Florence," said I, "declares what follows: if the hair of your Hercules were shaved off, there would not remain skull enough to hold his brains. With regard to his face, it is hard to distinguish whether it be the face of a man, or that of a creature something between a lion and an ox; it discovers no attention to what it is about; and it is so ill set upon the neck, with so little art and in so ungraceful a manner, that a more shocking piece of work was never seen. His great brawny shoulders resemble the two pommels of an ass's

pack-saddle; his breasts and their muscles bear no similitude to those of a man, but seem to have been drawn from a sack of melons. As he leans directly against the wall, the small of the back has the appearance of a bag filled with long cucumbers; it is impossible to conceive in what manner the two legs are fastened to this distorted figure, for it is hard to distinguish upon which leg he stands, or upon which he exerts any effort of his strength; nor does he appear to stand upon both, as he is sometimes represented by those masters of the art of statuary who know something of their business. It is plain too that the statue inclines more than one-third of a cubit forward; and this is the greatest and the most insupportable blunder which pretenders to sculpture can be guilty of. As for the arms, they both hang down in the most awkward and ungraceful manner imaginable; and so little art is displayed in them that people would be almost tempted to think that you had never seen a naked man in your life. The right leg of Hercules and that of Cacus touch at the middle of their calves, and if they were to be separated, not one of them only, but both, would remain without a calf in the place where they touch: besides, one of the feet of the Hercules is quite buried, and the other looks as if it stood upon hot coals."

Thus I went on, but the man could no longer stay with patience to hear the defects of his figure of Cacus enumerated. One reason was that what I said was true; the other, that I made the duke perfectly acquainted with his real character, as well as the rest of those present, who discovered the greatest symptoms of surprise imaginable, and began to be sensible that all I said was true. The brutish fellow then said: "O thou slanderer, dost thou say nothing of my design?" I answered: "That he who drew a good one could never work ill, and that I was convinced his design was of a piece with his works." Seeing that the duke and all present showed by their sarcastic looks and gestures that they thought the censure of his

performance to be just, he let his insolence entirely get the better of him, and turning to me with a most brutish physiognomy, called me by the basest and most infamous epithets. The duke endeavoured to restrain him by one of his severest frowns; all present appeared shocked, and fixing their eyes upon him said not a word. There was a pause; for hearing myself thus scandalously vilified in presence of these distinguished personages, I was seized with one of my transports of rage, and at first deprived of speech. Still I was equal to the occasion; and recovering myself, "Madman!" I exclaimed, "you exceed all bounds of reason and truth. Would to God I was so happy as to belong to that fraternity of illustrious delinquents who boast a title even from Jove to commit the greatest crimes with impunity, and perpetrate their enormities and oppressions under such a plea. But I am only a man, a poor humble creature who can lay claim to no such special order of merit and hereditary gift of oppressing others, and sinning with impunity. It is too wonderful and inexplicable for me; quite beyond the range of my humble art." At these words the duke, and all who were present, could not conceal their approbation; which expressed itself in a loud burst of merriment directed against my adversary, who stood quite aghast. Yet, though capable of expressing myself, when strongly goaded, in this strain of sarcastic pleasantry, you may believe me, gentle readers, my heart was almost bursting with grief and indignation. Here was one of the most worthless wretches upon the face of the earth, who had the impudence to affront me in so gross a manner, in the presence of a great prince: but the reader should at the same time take it into consideration, that on this occasion the duke was affronted and not I; for had I not been in his august presence, I should have killed the villain upon the spot. Perceiving that the noble personages present never once ceased laughing, this wretch, to divert them from deriding him, began to change the subject, and said: "This Benvenuto goes about making

it his boast that I promised him a block of marble."—"How!" said I, interrupting him, "did you not send word by your journeyman, Francesco Matteo Fabbro, that if I chose to work in marble, you would make me a present of a piece? Did I not accept the offer, and don't I still require of you the performance of your promise?" He replied: "Then depend upon it, you shall never have it." Thereupon I, who was incensed to the highest pitch by his former abuse, being suddenly deprived of my reason, as it were, forgot for a moment that I was in the presence of the duke, and cried out to him in a passion: "In plain terms, either send the marble to my house, or think of another world; for I will infallibly send you out of this." But, recollecting immediately that I was in the presence of so great a prince, I turned with an air of humility to his excellency and said: "My lord, one fool makes a hundred: the folly of this man had made me forget your excellency's glory, and myself, for which I humbly beg your pardon."

The duke, addressing himself to Bandinello, asked him whether it was true that he had promised me the marble. Bandinello answered it was. The duke thereupon said to me: "Go to the Duomo, and take a piece of marble to your liking." I replied, "that he had promised to send me one to my own house." Terrible words passed upon the occasion, and I insisted upon receiving it in that manner and no other.

The next morning a piece of marble was brought to my house, and I asked the porters from whom it came: they told me that it was sent by Bandinello, being the piece of marble which he had promised me. I ordered it to be carried into my shop, and took it in hand that moment; and whilst I was working upon it, I made my model; so eager was I to be employed in marble, that I could not have the patience to take the necessary time for making a model, with all the care and judgment that our art requires. Perceiving the marble crack, I several times

began to repent that I had undertaken the work; however, I made what I could out of it, I mean the Apollo and Hyacinthus, which, though imperfect, are still to be seen at my shop.

Whilst I was employed in this manner, the duke came to my house, and said to me several times, "Let the bronze alone for a while, and work a little in marble that I may see how you do it." I immediately took the tools, which are used in working upon marble, and began to apply them to the purpose. The duke inquiring about the model I had made for this work, I told him that the marble was quite broken, but I would warrant to make something of it notwithstanding; for though I could not resolve upon a model, I would still work on, and do the best I could. The duke, hearing this, caused a piece of Greek marble to be conveyed with the utmost expedition from Rome, to enable me to restore the antique Ganymede, which had given rise to the dispute between me and Bandinello. When the Greek marble arrived, I considered that it was a sin to break it into pieces, for the sake of making and repairing the head, arms, and other parts of the Ganymede. I therefore provided myself with another block, and for this piece of Greek marble I made a little waxen model, to which I gave the name of Narcissus: and as this marble had two holes, which were above a quarter of a cubit in depth and full two inches broad, I had recourse to the attitude which is seen in that part, to prevent the ill effect of those holes, so that I struck them out of my figure. But for many years past, that it rained constantly upon the marble, and these holes were always left full of water, the moisture had penetrated to such a degree that the marble became quite weak and almost rotten in the upper hole, and so it appeared when the water rose above a cubit and a half in my shop at the great inundation of the Arno; for as this piece of marble was placed upon a square piece of wood, the water above mentioned made it turn about, by which accident the

breasts were broken, so that I was obliged to mend them; and that the cleft might not appear where they were fastened on, I placed there a garland of flowers, which is still seen upon the breast of the figure. This work I executed at certain hours before day, or else upon holidays only, that I might not delay my great work of the statue of Perseus. As I was one morning amongst others preparing some tools to work at it, a little bit of steel flew into my right eye, and entered so far into the pupil that it was impossible to get it out, so that I was in very great danger of losing that eye. Several days after I sent for Maestro Raffaello de Pilli, a surgeon, who took two live pigeons, and making me lie upon my back, with a little knife opened a vein in each of their wings, so that the blood ran into my eye, and I was thereby greatly relieved. In the space of two days the bit of steel issued from my eye, and I found that I had received considerable ease and in a great measure recovered my sight.

The feast of St. Lucia approaching, I made a golden eye of a French crown, and got it offered to that saint by one of the daughters of my sister Liperata, a girl about ten years of age: in this manner did I testify my gratitude to God and to St. Lucia. For some time after I discontinued working upon the Narcissus, but went on with my Perseus, notwithstanding all the difficulties already enumerated, for I had formed a resolution to finish it and then to leave Florence.

CHAPTER XLI

As I had been particularly successful in casting my Medusa I made a model of my Perseus in wax, and flattered myself that I should have the same success in casting the latter in bronze, as I had had with the former. Upon its appearing to such advantage, and looking so beautiful in wax, the

duke, whether somebody else put it into his head, or whether it was a notion of his own, as he came to my house oftener than usual, once took occasion to say to me: "Benvenuto, this statue cannot be cast in bronze; it is not in the power of your art to compass it." Hearing him express himself in that manner, I discovered great vexation, and said: "My lord, I know that your excellency places very little confidence in me, and that you have but too good an opinion of those who speak ill of me; or else you do not understand things of this nature." Scarce did he suffer me to utter these words, when he answered: "I profess to understand them, and I do understand them perfectly." I replied: "You may understand them as a prince, but not as an artist; for if you had that skill in these matters, which you think you have, you would believe me upon account of the fine bronze head which I cast for your excellency, and which was sent to the Elbe; as also for having restored the beautiful figure of Ganymede, a work that gave me infinite trouble, insomuch that it would have been easier for me to have made a new one; likewise for having cast the Medusa, which stands here before your excellency, a performance of immense difficulty, in which I have done what no other man has done before me in this most laborious art. Consider, my lord, I have constructed a new sort of a furnace, in a manner unknown to other artists; for besides many other particular and curious inventions to be seen in it, I have made two issues for the bronze; for otherwise that difficult and distorted figure could never come out, and it was only by means of my skill and invention that it came out as well as it did: and do not imagine that every common artist could have done as much. Know likewise, my lord, that all the great and difficult undertakings that I have been employed in by the renowned King Francis, were attended with admirable success, purely on account of that king's generous encouragement of my labours, in providing me with every-

thing I wanted, and allowing me as many hands as I required. At certain times I had under me above forty journeymen, all of my own choosing; and this was the reason that I finished so many undertakings in so short a time. Therefore, my lord, take my advice, and afford me the assistance I want, for I have great hopes of producing a work that will please you; whereas, if your excellency discourages me, and does not supply me with the necessary helps, it is impossible that either I or any man living can produce anything worth notice."

The duke scarcely had patience to hear me out, but sometimes turned one way, sometimes another; and I was quite in despair when I recollected the circumstances in which I had lived in France. At last he all on a sudden said: "Tell me, Benvenuto, how is it possible that this fine head of Medusa, which Perseus holds aloft in his hand, should ever come out cleverly?" I immediately answered: "It is clear, my lord, that you are no connoisseur in statuary, as your excellency boasts yourself; for if you had any skill in the art, you would not be afraid of that fine head not coming out, but would express your apprehensions concerning that right foot, which is at such a distance below." The duke, half angry, addressing himself to some noblemen who were with him, said: "I really believe it is a practice of Benvenuto's to contradict and oppose everything he hears advanced;" then turning to me, as it were in derision, in which he was imitated by all present, he expressed himself thus: "I am willing to have patience to hear what reason you can allege, that can possibly induce me to believe what you affirm." I answered: "I will give your excellency a reason so satisfactory, that you will be able to conceive the full force of it." I thereupon began in these terms: "You know, my lord, that the nature of fire is to fly upwards; I therefore assure you that the head of Medusa will come out perfectly well. But as it is not the property of fire to descend, and it is necessary to force it down six cubits by art,

hence I affirm that it is impossible that yon foot should ever come out; but it will be an easy matter for me to make a new one. The duke thereupon said: "Why did you not think of contriving to make that foot come out as well as the head?"—"I must then," answered I, "have made the furnace much bigger, to be able to cast a piece of brass as thick as my leg, and with that weight of hot metal I should have made it come out by force; whereas, my brass, which goes down to the feet six cubits, as I mentioned before, is not above two inches thick. Therefore, it was not worth your notice, for it can soon be rectified; but when my mould is something more than half full, I have good hopes that from that half upwards, the fire mounting, by its natural property, the heads of Perseus and Medusa will come out admirably; and this you may depend upon." When I had laid before the duke all these reasons, with many more, which I for the sake of brevity omit, he shook his head, and departed.

I now took courage, resolving to depend on myself, and banished all those thoughts which from time to time occasioned me great inquietude, and made me sorely repent my ever having quitted France, with a view of assisting six poor nieces at Florence; which good intention proved the source and origin of all the misfortunes that afterwards befell me. However, I still flattered myself that if I could but finish my statue of Perseus, all my labours would be converted to delight, and meet with a glorious and happy reward. Thus, having recovered my vigour of mind, I exerted all my strength of body and of purse, though indeed I had but little money left, and began to purchase several loads of pine-wood from the pine-grove of the Serristori, hard by Monte Lupo; and whilst I was waiting for it, I covered my Perseus with the earth which I had prepared several months beforehand, that it might have its proper seasoning. After I had made its coat of earth, covered it well, and bound it properly with irons, I began by means of a slow fire to draw off the wax, which melted

away by many vent-holes; for the more of these are made, the better the moulds are filled; and when I had entirely stripped off the wax, I made a sort of fence round my Perseus—that is, round the mould above mentioned—of bricks, piling them one upon another, and leaving several vacuities for the fire to exhale at. I next began gradually to put on the wood, and kept a constant fire for two days and two nights, till, the wax being quite off, and the mould well baked, I began to dig a hole to bury my mould in, and observed all those fine methods of proceeding that are prescribed by our art. When I had completely dug my hole, I took my mould, and by means of levers and strong cables directed it with care, and suspended it a cubit above the level of the furnace, so that it hung exactly in the middle of the hole. I then let it gently down to the very bottom of the furnace, and placed it with all the care and exactness I possibly could. After I had finished this part of my task, I began to make a covering of the very earth I had taken off, and in proportion as I raised the earth, I made vents for it, which are a sort of tubes of baked earth, generally used for conduits, and other things of a similar nature. As soon as I saw that I had placed it properly, and that this manner of covering it, by putting on these small tubes in their proper places, was likely to answer, as also that my journeymen thoroughly understood my plan, which was very different from that of all other masters, and I was sure that I could depend upon them, I turned my thoughts to my furnace. I had caused it to be filled with several pieces of brass and bronze, and heaped them upon one another in the manner taught us by our art, taking particular care to leave a passage for the flames, that the metal might the sooner assume its colour and dissolve into a fluid. Thus, I with great alacrity excited my men to lay on the pine-wood, which, because of the oiliness of the resinous matter that oozes from the pine-tree, and that my furnace was admirably well made, burned at such a rate, that I was

continually obliged to run to and fro, which greatly fatigued me. I, however, bore the hardship; but to add to my misfortune, the shop took fire, and we were all very much afraid that the roof would fall in and crush us. From another quarter, that is, from the garden, the sky poured in so much rain and wind, that it cooled my furnace.

Thus did I contrive to struggle with these cross accidents for several hours, and exerted myself to such a degree that my constitution, though robust, could no longer bear such severe hardship, and I was suddenly attacked by a most violent intermitting fever; in short, I was so ill that I found myself under a necessity of lying down upon my bed. This gave me great concern, but it was unavoidable. I thereupon addressed myself to my assistants, who were about ten in number, consisting of masters who melted bronze, helpers, men from the country, and the journeymen that worked in the shop, amongst whom was Bernardino Manellini di Mugello, who had lived with me several years. After having recommended it to them all to take proper care of my business, I said to Bernardino: "My friend, be careful to observe the method which I have shown you, and use all possible expedition, for the metal will soon be ready. You cannot mistake: these other worthy men here will quickly make the tubes; with two such directors you can certainly contrive to pour out the hot metal by means of the mandriani or iron crooks; and I have no doubt but my mould will be filled completely. I find myself extremely ill, and really believe that in a few hours this severe disorder will put an end to my life." Thus I left them in great sorrow, and went to bed. I then ordered the maids to carry victuals and drink into the shop for all the men, and told them I did not expect to live till the next morning. They encouraged me notwithstanding, assuring me that my disorder would not last, as it was only the effect of overfatigue. In this manner did I continue for two hours in a violent fever, which I every moment perceived to increase;

and I was incessantly crying out, "I am dying, I am dying."

My housekeeper, whose name was Mona Fiore da Castel del Rio, was one of the most sensible and affectionate women in the world; she rebuked me for giving way to vain fears, and at the same time attended me with the greatest kindness and care imaginable: however, seeing me so very ill and terrified to such a degree, she could not contain herself, but shed a flood of tears, which she endeavoured to conceal from me. Whilst we were both in this deep affliction, I perceived a man enter the room, who in his person appeared to be as crooked and distorted as a great S, and began to express himself in these terms, with a tone of voice as dismal and melancholy as those who exhort and pray with persons who are going to be executed: "Alas! poor Benvenuto, your work is spoiled, and the misfortune admits of no remedy."

No sooner had I heard the words uttered by this messenger of evil, but I cried out so loud that my voice might be heard to the skies, and got out of bed. I began immediately to dress, and giving plenty of kicks and cuffs to the maidservants and the boy as they offered to help me on with my clothes, I complained bitterly in these terms: "O you envious and treacherous wretches, this is a piece of villainy contrived on purpose; but I swear by the living God that I will sift it to the bottom, and before I die give such proofs who I am as shall not fail to astonish the whole world." Having huddled on my clothes I went with a mind boding evil to the shop, where I found all those whom I had left so alert and in such high spirits, standing in the utmost confusion and astonishment. I thereupon addressed them thus: "Listen all of you to what I am going to say; and since you either would not or could not follow the method I pointed out, obey me now that I am present: my work is before us, and let none of you offer to oppose or contradict me, for such cases as this require activity and not counsel." Hereupon one Alessandro Lastricati had the

assurance to say to me: "Look you, Benvenuto, you have undertaken a work which our art cannot compass, and which is not to be effected by human power."

Hearing these words I turned round in such a passion and seemed so bent upon mischief that both he and all the rest unanimously cried out to me: "Give your orders, and we will all second you in whatever you command: we will assist you as long as we have breath in our bodies." These kind and affectionate words they uttered, as I firmly believe, in a persuasion that I was upon the point of expiring. I went directly to examine the furnace, and saw all the metal in it concreted. I thereupon ordered two of the helpers to step over the way to Capretta, a butcher, for a load of young oak, which had been above a year drying, and had been offered me by Maria Ginevera, wife to the said Capretta.

Upon his bringing me the first bundles of it, I began to fill the grate. This sort of oak makes a brisker fire than any other wood whatever; but the wood of elder-trees and pine-trees is used in casting artillery, because it makes a mild and gentle fire. As soon as the concreted metal felt the power of this violent fire, it began to brighten and glitter. In another quarter I made them hurry the tubes with all possible expedition, and sent some of them to the roof of the house to take care of the fire, which through the great violence of the wind had acquired new force; and towards the garden I had caused some tables with pieces of tapestry and old clothes to be placed, in order to shelter me from the rain. As soon as I had applied the proper remedy to each evil, I with a loud voice cried out to my men to bestir themselves and lend a helping hand; so that when they saw that the concreted metal began to melt again, the whole body obeyed me with such zeal and alacrity that every man did the work of three. Then I caused a mass of pewter weighing about sixty pounds to be thrown upon the metal in the furnace, which with the other helps, as

the brisk wood fire, and stirring it sometimes with iron, and sometimes with long poles, soon became completely dissolved. Finding that, contrary to the opinion of my ignorant assistants, I had effected what seemed as difficult as to raise the dead, I recovered my vigour to such a degree that I no longer perceived whether I had any fever, nor had I the least apprehension of death. Suddenly a loud noise was heard, and a glittering of fire flashed before our eyes, as if it had been the darting of a thunderbolt. Upon the appearance of this extraordinary phenomenon, terror seized on all present, and on none more than myself. This tremendous noise being over, we began to stare at each other, and perceived that the cover of the furnace had burst and flown off, so that the bronze began to run.

I immediately caused the mouths of my mould to be opened; but finding that the metal did not run with its usual velocity, and apprehending that the cause of it was that the fusibility of the metal was injured by the violence of the fire, I ordered all my dishes and porringers, which were in number about two hundred, to be placed one by one before my tubes, and part of them to be thrown into the furnace; upon which all present perceived that my bronze was completely dissolved, and that my mould was filling; they now with joy and alacrity assisted and obeyed me. I for my part was sometimes in one place, sometimes in another, giving my directions and assisting my men, before whom I offered up this prayer: "O God, I address myself to Thee, who, of Thy Divine power, didst rise from the dead, and ascend in glory to heaven. I acknowledge in gratitude this mercy that my mould has been filled: I fall prostrate before Thee, and with my whole heart return thanks to Thy Divine Majesty." My prayer being over, I took a plate of meat which stood upon a little bench, and ate with a great appetite. I then drank with all my journeymen and assistants, and went joyful and in good health to bed; for there were

still two hours of night; and I rested as well as if I had been troubled with no manner of disorder.

My good housekeeper, without my having given any orders, had provided a young capon for my dinner. When I arose, which was not till about noon, she accosted me in high spirits, and said merrily: "Is this the man that thought himself dying? It is my firm belief that the cuffs and kicks which you gave us last night, when you were quite frantic and possessed, frightened away your fever, which, apprehending lest you should fall upon it in the same manner, took to flight." So my whole poor family, having got over such panics and hardships, without delay procured earthen vessels to supply the place of the pewter dishes and porringers, and we all dined together very cheerfully; indeed, I do not remember having ever in my life eaten a meal with greater satisfaction, or with a better appetite. After dinner, all those who had assisted me in my work came and congratulated me upon what had happened, returned thanks to the Divine Being, for having interposed so mercifully in our behalf, and declared that they had in theory and practice learnt such things as were judged impossible by other masters. I thereupon thought it allowable to boast a little of my knowledge and skill in this fine art, and, pulling out my purse, satisfied all my workmen for their labour.

My mortal enemy, Pier Francesco Riccio, the duke's steward, was very eager to know how the affair had turned out; so that the two whom I suspected of being the cause of my metal's concreting in the manner above related, told him that I was not a man, but rather a downright devil, for I had compassed that which was not in the power of art to effect; with many other surprising things which would have been too much even for the infernal powers. As they greatly exaggerated what had passed, perhaps with a view of excusing themselves, the steward wrote to the duke, who was then at Pisa, an account still more

pompous, and more replete with the marvellous than that which the workmen had given him.

Having left my work to cool during two days after it was cast, I began gradually to uncover it. I first of all found the Medusa's head, which had come out admirably by the assistance of the vents, as I had observed to the duke that the property of fire was to fly upwards. I proceeded to uncover the rest, and found that the other head, I mean that of Perseus, was likewise come out perfectly well. This occasioned me still greater surprise, because, as it is seen in the statue, it is much lower than that of Medusa, the mouth of that figure being placed over the head and shoulders of Perseus. I found that where the head of Perseus ends, all the bronze was exhausted which I had in my furnace. This surprised me very much, that there should not be anything over and above what is necessary in casting. My astonishment, indeed, was raised to such a degree that I looked upon it as a miracle immediately wrought by the Almighty. I went on uncovering it with great success, and found every part turn out to admiration, till I reached the foot of the right leg, which supports the figure, where I found the heel come out: so proceeding to examine it, and thinking that the whole was filled up, in one respect I was glad, in another sorry, because I had told the duke it would not have that effect. Continuing, however, to uncover it, I found that not only the toes were wanting, but part of the foot itself, so that there was almost one half deficient. This occasioned me some new trouble; but I was not displeased at it, because I could thereby convince the duke that I understood my business thoroughly; and though there had come out a great deal more of that foot than I thought there would, the reason was, that in consequence of the several accidents that had happened, it was heated much more than it could have been in the regular course of business; especially as the pewter plates had been thrown into the furnace, a thing never done before.

I was highly pleased that my work had succeeded so well, and went to Pisa to pay my respects to the duke, who received me in the most gracious manner imaginable. The duchess vied with him in kindness to me; and though the steward had written them an account of the affair, it appeared to them much more wonderful and extraordinary when I related it myself. Upon my speaking to him of the foot of Perseus, which had not come out (a circumstance of which I had apprised his excellency), I perceived that he was filled with the utmost astonishment, and told the affair to the duchess in the same terms that I had before related it to him. Finding that these great personages were become so favourable to me, I availed myself of the opportunity to request the duke's permission to go to Rome; he granted it in the most obliging terms, and desired me to return speedily, in order to finish my statue of Perseus. He at the same time gave me letters of recommendation to his ambassador, Averardo Serristori. This happened in the beginning of the pontificate of Pope Julio de Monti.

CHAPTER XLII

Before my departure from Florence I directed my men to proceed with the work according to the method I had taught them. The cause of my journey was this: having made a bust of Bindo Antonio Altoviti as large as the life, I sent it to him to Rome; and he put it into a cabinet richly furnished with antiques and other things of value; but an unfit repository for pieces of sculpture or even for pictures, because the windows were under those fine works; so that being placed in a wrong light, they did not appear to that advantage which they would have done if they had been in a proper situation. One day Bindo happened to be standing at his door, when Michael Angelo Buonarroti the sculptor was passing by; the former de-

sired the latter to come in and take a view of his cabinet of curiosities. Michael Angelo, having complied with his request, asked Bindo who the artist was that had taken his likeness in so masterly a manner. "You must know," added he, "that I am highly pleased with this head, though there are very fine antiques near it; but if those windows were above, instead of being underneath, they would appear more conspicuous, and your bust would, even amongst so many pieces of antiquity, claim a high degree of admiration."

Michael Angelo, after leaving his friend Bindo, then wrote me a very polite letter to this purport: "My dear friend Benvenuto, I have many years known you for one of the ablest jewellers in the world, and I now find that you have equal abilities as a sculptor. You must know that Signor Bindo Altoviti showed me his bust in bronze, and told me that it was done by you. I was highly pleased with the execution, but it gave me great uneasiness to see it placed in a disadvantageous light: had it but been properly situated, it would have appeared to have been the masterpiece it is." This letter abounded with the most affectionate and the most favourable expressions concerning myself; so, before I set out for Rome, I showed it to the duke, who perused it with great pleasure, and said to me: "Benvenuto, I would have you write to him, and if you can prevail on him to come to Florence, I will make him one of the eight-and-forty." Accordingly I wrote him a most affectionate epistle, expressing the duke's sentiments as above, and saying a hundred times more than I had been commissioned to say; however, to avoid committing any error, I showed it to his excellency before I sealed it, and told him that perhaps I had promised him too much. He answered that I had done very right; that Michael Angelo deserved still more than I had promised him, and that he proposed conferring on him more considerable favours. This letter of mine Michael Angelo never answered, at which neglect the duke was highly offended.

Upon my arrival at Rome I went to lodge at the house of Bindo Altoviti. He immediately told me that he had shown his bust in bronze to Michael Angelo, who had bestowed upon it the highest praises imaginable; so we talked together of this affair for a considerable time. This man had in his hands one thousand two hundred crowns of mine, which he borrowed of me to make up the sum of five thousand two hundred that he had lent to the duke: thus four thousand were his own, and mine were in his name. He regularly paid me the just interest for my share, which was the reason that I undertook to make his bust. When he first saw it in wax, he sent me fifty crowns by Giuliano Paccalli, his clerk. I did not choose to take the money, but sent it back by the messenger, and afterwards told Bindo himself that it was sufficient for me if he would keep that money with the rest of mine in his hands, and let me receive the interest of it. But now I perceived that he had bad intentions, and instead of caressing me according to custom, he behaved quite rudely: though he entertained me in his house, he was never in a good humour, but quite the reverse. However, we settled the affair in a few words. I gave up my payment for making the bust, and even what the bronze had stood me in, and agreed that Bindo should keep my money in his hands and pay me 15 per cent. upon it during my natural life.

One of the first things I did at Rome was to go to kiss the Pope's foot. At that moment arrived Averardo Serristori, ambassador from our duke. I talked for some time with his Holiness, and found him much disposed to favour me; nay, I verily believe that disgusted with the difficulties I had to encounter at Florence, I should have settled again with his Holiness's consent at Rome, but I found that the Florentine ambassador counteracted me. I went to Michael Angelo Buonarroti, and repeated to him the contents of the letter I had sent him from Florence by the duke's orders. He told me he was employed in build-

ing St. Peter's Church, and for that reason could not quit Rome. I then said to him that since he had determined upon the model of the structure, he might leave his pupil Urbino in his place, who would punctually follow his directions, and at the same time I made him several new promises in the duke's name. He thereupon looked at me attentively, and asked, with a smile, whether I myself was pleased with my situation at the court of Florence. Though I assured him I was perfectly well satisfied, and that I met with the kindest treatment imaginable, he seemed to be thoroughly acquainted with all my grievances; and his final answer was, that he could not think of leaving Rome. I represented to him that he would act most laudably in returning to his own country, which was governed by a most just prince, and one who loved men of genius and abilities the most of any potentate the world had ever produced. I have mentioned that he had an apprentice from Urbino, who had lived with him several years, rather as a servant boy than in any other capacity: this was evident enough, for the lad had learned nothing at all of the business. Upon my pressing Michael Angelo so hard that he had not a word to say in his defence, he turned suddenly to his apprentice, as it were to ask his opinion of the matter. The apprentice, with rustic gestures and a rough voice, said: "I will never quit Michael Angelo till I have laid him out, or he me." I could not help laughing at the simplicity of these words, so departed without ceremony.

After I had transacted my business with Bindo Altoviti so unsuccessfully as to lose my bust of bronze, and to intrust my money in his hands during life, I saw clearly what the principles of merchants are, and returned to Florence very much dissatisfied with my expedition. I waited on his excellency, who was then at the castle, upon the Bridge of Rifredi. By the way I met with Signor Pier Francesco Riccio, the steward, and on making an offer to accost him with the civilities which custom prescribes, he

exclaimed with the utmost surprise: "So, you are returned!" His amazement still continuing, he clapped his hands, told me that the duke was at the castle; then turned his back to me and marched off. I could not possibly conceive why the fool behaved so oddly. I repaired, however, to the castle, and entering the garden, where the duke happened to be walking, I saw his excellency at a distance. At the sight of me he discovered symptoms of great surprise, and signified to me by a nod that I might go about my business. I, who had flattered myself that he would caress me rather more than at my departure, seeing him behave thus extravagantly, returned very much disgusted to Florence, and resuming my business, endeavoured to bring my works to a conclusion with all possible expedition. Not being able to conjecture the cause of the cold reception I had met with, I carefully observed in what manner I was looked upon by Signor Sforza, and others of the duke's intimates; and took it into my head to ask Sforza what was the meaning of this indifference: the latter answered, laughing, "Benvenuto, endeavour to act the part of a man of honour, and fear nothing." Several days after, he procured an interview for me with the duke, who received me with a great many odd civilities, and asked me what was doing at Rome. I entered into conversation with him, and gave him an account of the bust of bronze that I had made for Bindo Altoviti, with what happened upon the occasion. I perceived that he listened to me with the greatest attention imaginable; so I told him all that had passed between Michael Angelo Buonarroti and me, at which he discovered some resentment, but at the same time could not help laughing at the simplicity of the apprentice. He said that the loss would be Michael Angelo's, and not his: I made my bow and retired. Doubtless Pier Francesco, the steward, had done me some ill office with the duke, which proved unsuccessful, for God is always a friend to truth, and as He has hitherto extricated and preserved me from

the greatest dangers, I hope He will continue His protection to the end of my life, in the course of which I have gone through such a sea of trouble and distress; yet I proceed forward undaunted in my career, with His assistance, nor am I terrified by the frowns of fortune or the influence of inauspicious stars, so long as God favours me with His all-sufficient grace.

Now, gentle reader, thou art to hear a most dreadful accident. I made all the haste I could to finish my work, and in the evening went to the duke's wardrobe, where I used to assist the goldsmiths employed by his excellency, most of whose works were after my designs. The duke took great delight in seeing them busy, and in conversing with me, which induced me sometimes to go there in the daytime. One day as I happened to be in his wardrobe, his excellency came thither, as he often did, particularly when he knew that I was there. He began to chat with me, and I made myself so agreeable to him that he appeared to be in a better humour than usual. All on a sudden one of his secretaries entered the room, and whispered him in the ear, as if about some business of great importance: the duke rose, and they went together into another apartment. As the duchess had sent to see what the duke was doing, the page told her that he was talking and laughing with Benvenuto, and we were very merry; her excellency thereupon entered the wardrobe, and not finding the duke, sat down by us. Perceiving that it would be some time before we had done work, she turned to me with great good-humour, and showing me a fine string of large pearls, asked me what I thought of it. I praised it highly. Her excellency then said: "I want the duke to buy it for me; so, Benvenuto, praise it in his presence as much as possible." Hearing the duchess express herself in this manner, I discovered my sentiments to her with the most profound respect in these terms: "I thought that string of pearls belonged to your excellency, and it was proper that I should say no ill of anything that was yours; but

at present I am under a necessity of speaking my mind. You must then understand that by my knowledge in these matters I can discover many defects in these pearls, and would by no means advise you to buy them." She answered: "The merchant offers them to me for six thousand crowns; and if they had not some defects, they would be worth twelve thousand."—"If the string of pearls," replied I, "were ever so fine, I would not advise any one to give above five thousand crowns for it; because pearls, produced from fish, are not like jewels—in process of time they lose their value; but diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and sapphires are jewels which lose nothing by growing old, and therefore are a proper purchase." The duchess, somewhat piqued, said she had a fancy for these pearls, therefore begged I would praise them to the duke, and even make no scruple of telling an untruth to serve her, and I should find my account in it.

I, who was always a lover of truth and an enemy to falsehood, being then under a necessity of telling lies, lest I should forfeit the favour of so great a princess, repaired with these unlucky pearls to the apartment to which the duke was then retired. As soon as he saw me he said: "Benvenuto, what are you about?" I pulled out the string of pearls, and answered: "My lord, I am come to show you a fine string of the choicest pearls;" then bestowing the highest praises on them, I added: "Buy them, my lord, buy them, by all means." The duke told me he did not choose to buy them, as they were not perfect. To this I answered: "Excuse me, my lord, these surpass all other pearls in beauty, and I do not believe there were ever so many such on one bunch." The duchess was standing behind a door not far off, and could overhear what I said: so I praised the pearls up to the skies. When the duke first looked at them, he said he would not have them as they were not nearly so good as I said; but I maintaining they were beautiful, he said: "Benvenuto, I know you are an excellent judge of these things, and if the pearls are so

very fine, I should not much mind purchasing them, as well to please the duchess as to have them in my possession for our children." As I had begun to tell lies, I plunged deeper and deeper into the mire, depending upon the duchess, who, I hoped, would from time to time assist me. I was to receive two hundred crowns for making the bargain, for the duchess had hinted to me as much; but I resolved not to touch a farthing of the money, lest the duke should think I was acting in this manner with an interested view. He repeated to me again that he looked upon me as a perfect judge of such things, and begged that if I were the man of principle he took me to be, I would speak the truth. Thereupon the tears came into my eyes, and I said to him: "My lord, if I tell you the truth, I make the duchess my mortal enemy: I shall in consequence be under a necessity of leaving this city; and my statue of Perseus, which I promised the illustrious school of Florence, will become the scoff of my enemies; I therefore beg your excellency would consider my case." The duke, perceiving that I had spoken before by compulsion, desired me to put my confidence in him and fear nothing. I asked him how it was possible to conceal the affair from the duchess. He bade me tell her that the pearls were quite eclipsed by a necklace of diamonds. Upon his expressing himself in that manner, I told him my real opinion of the pearls, and declared that they were not worth above two thousand crowns.

The duchess, perceiving that we were quiet, for we lowered our voices as much as we possibly could, came forward, and said to the duke: "My dear lord, I beg you would buy me that string of pearls, because I have taken a particular fancy to it; and your great artist, Benvenuto, says he never saw a finer." The duke told her he would not buy it upon any account. "Why, my dear lord," replied the duchess, "will not your excellency buy that string of pearls to oblige me?"—"Because," answered the duke, "I do not choose to throw away my money."—

"How is it throwing away your money," replied the duchess, "if Benvenuto here, in whom you have so much confidence, has assured me it would be cheap at upwards of three thousand crowns?" The duke then said: "Madam, Benvenuto has told me that if I buy it I shall throw away my money, because these pearls are neither round nor equal, and there are many old ones among them. To convince yourself that what I say is true, do but observe that pearl there, and that other; look there, and there again: in a word, they are by no means for my purpose." Upon his expressing himself in that manner the duchess gave me a very severe look, and, shaking her head with a menacing air, left the apartment.

I was now strongly tempted to hurry away to some other part of the world; but as my Perseus was in a manner finished, I could not think of neglecting to take it out of the mould. Let every one but consider my case, and seriously reflect on the cruel dilemma to which I was reduced. The duke had given orders to his servants to suffer me constantly to pass through the apartments, and to have access to his excellency wherever he happened to be; and the duchess now laid her injunctions upon the very same servants to turn me out whenever I came to the palace. These fellows, as soon as they saw me coming, would quit their posts, and order me to turn back; but they took care to act thus unperceived by the duke, for if his excellency saw me first, he either called to me, or made me a sign to enter. The duchess sent for that Bernardone, of whose knavery she had so bitterly complained, and recommended the affair of the pearls to him in the same manner she had done to me. Bernardone thereupon told her that her excellency might depend upon him. The rogue went into the duke's presence with the above-mentioned string of pearls in his hand. The duke no sooner saw him than he ordered him to quit his presence. The knave, with his odd, affected tone of voice, with which he drawled through his nose in a ridiculous manner, said:

"Ah, my dear lord, buy that string of pearls for the poor lady, who cannot live without it." He added many more foolish expressions; and at last quite disgusted the duke, who ordered him to begone instantly, or he would give him a slap in the face. The fellow knew very well what he was about; for if by means of flattery, or any other artifice whatever, he could prevail on the duke to make that purchase, he was sure of gaining the duchess's good graces, and of receiving several hundred crowns for the bargain. He continued therefore to fawn and flatter, and the duke gave him several good sound boxes on the ear to make him quit the place. So smartly were the blows given that not only his cheeks became red, but the tears burst into his eyes; the fellow notwithstanding persisted in his importunities, and cried: "Ah, my lord, your faithful servant would fain discharge his duty, and willingly submit to bear any severe treatment, provided the poor lady might be indulged in her desire." The duke at last, quite tired of the man, being also wearied out with cuffing him about, and no longer able to resist his love for the duchess, whom he delighted to humour in everything, said to Bernardone: "Get you gone, and make a bargain for the pearls; for I am willing to do anything to please the duchess."

From this whole transaction, the reader may form a judgment of the fury of adverse fortune in persecuting a poor man, and the infamous manner in which she favours the base and worthless. I totally forfeited the good graces of the duchess, which was in a great measure the cause of my being deprived of her husband's favour; and the scoundrel Bernardone was not only well paid for treating about the pearls, but became a favourite both of the duke and his consort. Hence it is evident, that when fortune bears us a grudge, it avails nothing to act agreeably to the dictates of virtue and honour.

CHAPTER XLIII

About this time the war of Siena broke out, and the duke choosing to fortify Florence, consigned the gates of the city to the care of the most skilful engineers and architects. Upon this occasion, the gate leading to Prato, with the little gate of Arno, leading to the mills, fell to my share; to the Cavalier Bandinello was given the gate of St. Friano; to Pasqualino of Ancona, the gate of S. Pier Gattolini; to Giuliano di Baccio d'Agnolo, a carpenter, the gate of St. George; to Particino, a carpenter, the gate leading to S. Nicholas; to Francesco da San Gallo, the sculptor, surnamed Margolla, was consigned that which leads to Croce; and to Giambattista, commonly called Tasso, was given the Pinti gate: in like manner other bastions and gates were distributed amongst other engineers, whose names I cannot now recollect; nor is it very material.

The duke, who was a man of abilities, and of a respectable character, when uninfluenced by others, went his rounds about the city; and after his excellency had well surveyed it, and determined upon his measures, he sent for Lattanzio Gorini, his paymaster—an office in which Lattanzio particularly delighted: his excellency then ordered him to draw plans of the several methods he had determined on to repair the fortifications of his capital. Accordingly Lattanzio sent each of us a plan of the gate he was to fortify. When I received mine, perceiving that the method was altogether defective, I went with it in my hand to his excellency, in order to show him my objections; but I no sooner began to speak, than he turned about to me in a violent passion, and told me he would readily allow me the superiority in statuary, but in this business of fortification I must in my turn yield to him; therefore I was to follow the plan which he had sent

me. To this short admonition I answered in the gentlest terms possible, and said: "My lord, even with regard to the method of making beautiful statues, I have learned something from your excellency, for we have always had disputes on the subject; in like manner, with regard to this article of fortifying your city, which is a matter of much greater consequence than casting statues, I beg your excellency would vouchsafe to hear me, that by conversing with you upon the subject, you may instruct me in what manner I am to serve you." By these conciliatory expressions the duke was prevailed to enter into a conversation with me. I made it appear by clear and convincing reasons that his method of fortifying would never answer: upon which he desired me to go and draw a plan myself, and he would see how he liked it. I drew two plans, according to the right method of fortification, and carried them to his excellency, who then, distinguishing the true from the false method, said to me with great good humour: "Go and fortify the two gates in your own way: I have no further objection." I thereupon began the work with all possible expedition.

There was upon guard at the gate of Prato, a Lombard captain, a robust, gigantic man, who spoke in a very rough, brutal manner, and was exceedingly ignorant and presumptuous. This man questioning me concerning what I was about, I, with great mildness, showed him my plans, and found it a very difficult matter to make him conceive the method I intended to observe in my operations. The stupid mortal now shook his head, now turned himself one way and now another, often changed the position of his legs, twisted his mustachios, which were very long, frequently pulled the vizor of his cap over his eyes, and uttered oaths and imprecations, telling me he did not understand this puzzling affair of mine. Being at last quite tired of the fool, I desired him to leave it to me, who did understand it: so I turned my back on him, at which being somewhat provoked, he cried out:

"I say, sir, you and I must have a tilt together." I immediately answered him in a violent passion (for he had quite exasperated me): "It will be less trouble to me to run you through the body than to make the bastion for this gate." So we both at the same instant clapped our hands to our swords; but scarce had we drawn, when a considerable number of gentlemen, as well Florentines as courtiers from other parts of the country, came and interposed. Most of them blamed my adversary, telling him that he was in the wrong, that I was a man capable of making him pay dear for what he did, and that if the duke came to know what had passed between us, the captain would have reason to repent it. He then went about his business, and I began to work at my bastion.

When I had settled in what manner it was to be erected, I repaired to the other little gate of Arno, where I met with a captain from Cesena, one of the politest men I ever knew of his profession. In his behaviour he had all the gentleness of a lady, and yet upon occasion he showed himself to be one of the bravest and most formidable men living. This gentleman observed my manner of proceeding so attentively that I could not help taking notice of it: he desired to know what I was about, and I with great complaisance explained my plan to him. In a word, we vied with each other in politeness and civilities, and I acquitted myself much better in making this bastion than the other. When I had almost finished my bastions, Piero Strozzi's men made an irruption into the district of Prato, which threw the inhabitants into such a panic that they all instantly quitted it: on which account all the carriages of that country were loaded, every man removing with his effects to the city. As the number of carts occasioned their obstructing each other, upon observing the great confusion, I bade the guards at the gate take care there happened no disturbance there, as had been the case at the gates of Turin, for if they should have occasion to let down the portcullis,

it might very possibly be unable to do its office, and remain suspended upon one of those carts. The fool of a captain, of whom mention has been made above, hearing these words, began to give me abusive language. I answered him in the same style, so that we had a worse quarrel than before: we were, however, parted. Having completed my bastions, I received a good round sum of crowns that I little expected, which proved of great service to me, and I returned with alacrity to finish my Perseus.

About this time some curious antiquities were discovered in the district of Arezzo, amongst which was the chimæra, that lion of bronze, to be seen in the apartments next to the great hall of the palace. With it was likewise found a considerable quantity of small statues of bronze, covered either with earth or rust, and each of them wanting the head, hands, or feet; the duke took pleasure in cleaning these statues himself, with goldsmiths' chisels. I happened one day to have occasion to speak to his excellency, when he put into my hand a small hammer, with which I struck the little chisels which the duke held in his hand, and in that manner the figures were separated from the earth and rust that covered them. Whilst we thus passed several evenings together, the duke employed me to supply the limbs that were wanting to the little statues; and he took such delight in these small labours of the chisel, as to make me work even by day, and if I were tardy in going to him, he would send for me. I several times gave his excellency to understand that this made me neglect my Perseus, and would be attended with several bad consequences: the first of these, and which gave me the greatest uneasiness, was that the length of time which my work required would tire his excellency, as it did in fact; the next was that I had several workmen, and my not being in the way gave rise to many inconveniences, for they not only spoiled my work, but grew quite idle and negligent.

The duke therefore contented himself with my going to him after sunset, and I had so conciliated his affection that when I visited him in the evening he caressed me more than ever. About this time the new apartments were built towards the menagerie, so that his excellency desiring to retire to a private room, got a little chamber made up for him in these new buildings; and hither he ordered me to come to him through his wardrobe, which I did with the greatest privacy, by means of certain little secret passages on the other side of the great Hall. But in a few days the duchess deprived me of this accommodation, by causing all these passages to be shut up, so that every evening that I came to the palace, I was obliged to wait a considerable time, and, as she was ill, I never came without occasioning some inconvenience to her. Both for this and another cause she had taken such a dislike to me that she could not so much as bear the sight of my person. Though I had so much trouble, and received so many insults, I patiently continued my visits, and the duke had given express orders that as soon as ever I knocked at those doors they should be opened to me; so that without being questioned, I was suffered to go wherever I would. It sometimes happened that as I unexpectedly entered those apartments, I found the duchess engaged, when she would fly into such a passion with me that I used to be quite frightened, and she would constantly say, "Will you never have done mending those little statues? Your coming at present is quite disagreeable to me." My answer was always couched in the gentlest terms: "My illustrious and only patroness, there is nothing I desire more than to serve you with fidelity and the most perfect obedience; and as these works which the duke has employed me in will last several months, let me know, madam, whether it is your pleasure that I should come here no more: if it be, I will come no more upon any account, let who will send for me: and even should the duke himself send, I will

say I am indisposed, and will not obey his order." Her reply was: "I do not desire you to come no more, neither do I say you should not obey the duke, but I really think these works of yours will never have an end." Whether the duke guessed something of this, or whatever else might be the cause, his excellency again began to send for me as soon as ever it was sunset, and the messenger desired me to come without fail, for the duke waited for me. I continued to struggle with these difficulties several weeks, and one evening, as I was entering according to custom, the duke, who seemed to be engaged in some secret conversation with the duchess, turned to me in the most violent passion imaginable, and I being somewhat terrified, was for retiring directly, when he said to me all on a sudden: "Come in, my friend Benvenuto; go to your business, and I will soon follow you." As I was passing by, Signor Don Garzia, the duke's son, then quite an infant, took me by the cloak, and played the prettiest tricks with me that were possible for such a child: the duke expressing some surprise at this, said to me: "How pleasant it is to see my very children so fond of you."

Whilst my time was taken up in these little trifling jobs, the princes Don Giovanni, Don Arnando, and Don Garzia, every evening came into the room where I was at work, and, unknown to the duke, began to play their tricks upon me. When I begged they would leave off, they made answer they could not; and I said to them: "You cannot, because you will not: go your ways and leave me:" at the same time the duke and duchess began to laugh. Another evening having finished the four little figures of bronze, which are joined at the base, I mean Jupiter, Mercury, Minerva, and Danae, the mother of Perseus, with her little son Perseus sitting at her feet, I removed these small figures to the apartment where I worked in the evening, and placed them in proper order, raising them somewhat above the eye, so that they made a very

pretty sight. The duke being apprised of this, came somewhat sooner than usual; and because the person who had brought him the intelligence, had represented them as something far beyond what they really were, affirming that they surpassed the works of the ancients, with other exaggerations of the like nature, the duke came with the duchess, and talked to her in raptures of my works. I immediately rose and advanced to meet him: the duke with a noble and striking gesture lifted up his right hand, in which he held a fine large slip of a pear tree, and said to me: "My friend Benvenuto, put this pear tree into your garden." I answered: "My lord, are you in earnest, when you desire me to put it into my garden?" The duke repeated his words, and said: "Into your garden, which is now your own, house and all, do you understand me?" I thereupon thanked both the duke and duchess in the most respectful manner.

They then both sat down before the little statues; for above two hours they talked of nothing else, and the duchess took such a liking to them that she said: "I will by no means suffer those figures to be lost by being placed upon that base down in the great square, where they will be in danger of being spoiled; on the contrary, I must get you to set them up in an apartment of mine, where they shall be taken particular care of, and kept in a manner suitable to their excellence." I opposed what she said by a variety of arguments; and perceiving that she was determined that I should not place them upon the base where they now stand, I waited till the day following. I then repaired to the palace about six o'clock, and finding that both the duke and the duchess were gone to take an airing, as I had already properly prepared the base, I caused the statues to be brought down, and fixed them with lead in the position in which they were to stand. When the duchess saw this, she was so highly provoked that had it not been for the duke, who took my part to his utmost, I should have come off worse than I did.

However, in consequence of her resentment about the string of pearls, and for this affair, she did me so many ill offices that the duke at last left off amusing his leisure hours with me: hence it was that I ceased going to the palace, and soon had the same difficulty of access as before.

I returned to lodge at the house to which I had removed my Perseus, and went on with it under all the difficulties that have been already enumerated; that is to say, without money, and with so many other cross accidents that one half of them would have discouraged a man of the most determined resolution. I, however, proceeded. Upon my happening one day to hear mass at S. Piero Scheraggio, I saw Bernardone the goldsmith and broker whom the duke had promoted to the place of master of the mint, as he was coming out of the church. Scarcely had the wretch passed the doors when he committed a gross breach of good manners, which so provoked me that I accosted him with many opprobrious words, and then ran home for a cudgel; but Bernardone fled directly to the mint. I stood some time, however, at my door, and ordered my boys to wait in the street, and make me a sign as soon as they saw the brute. After I had waited a considerable time, I began to grow tired, and as my passion had subsided a little, I took it into consideration that blows are never under control, and that the consequences of such an affair might prove dangerous. I therefore resolved to take a different sort of revenge, and as this had happened within a day or two of the festival of our tutelary saint St. John, I wrote some verses and posted them up on the church of S. Piero Scheraggio. The purport of them was as follows:—

"Here lies Bernardone of the long-ear'd tribe,
A spy, a thief, and a broker to boot;
If Pandora's box you'd wish to describe,
Say it let out that bore, a most senseless brute."

These verses soon became known at the palace; the duke and duchess laughed heartily, and crowds of people gathered about the church, who were greatly diverted with the adventure. As they looked towards the mint, and fixed their eyes upon Bernardone, his son Baccio perceiving it, in a violent passion ran and tore the paper, and biting his finger, threatened the people with his shrill voice, which sounded through his nose, making a great clamour.

The duke, being informed that my statue of Perseus would bear inspection as a finished piece, came one day to see it, and showed by many evident signs that it gave him the highest satisfaction imaginable; so, turning to some noblemen in his retinue, he expressed himself as follows: "This work appears to me exceedingly beautiful: it ought likewise to be approved of by the people; therefore, my friend Benvenuto, before you have quite done with it, I should be obliged to you if you would for half a day throw open the gate before the large square that we may see what the populace think of it; for there can be no doubt but that, when it is viewed in an open place, it must make a very different appearance from what it does when seen in this confined manner." I answered to this, very humbly: "Depend upon it, my lord, it will appear half as well again. Does not your excellency remember having seen it in the garden of my house, in which spacious place it appeared to as great advantage as it could in the garden of the Innocents? Bandinello came to see it; and notwithstanding his natural malevolence, put some constraint upon himself to praise my performance, though he never spoke well of anybody in his life before. I perceive that your excellency listens too much to his insinuations." When I expressed myself thus, he smiled somewhat scornfully; and, still in the mildest terms, he begged me to oblige him. He left me, and I began to prepare to exhibit my statue; but, as it wanted a little gilding, varnish, and other things of the same kind, which are generally

left to the time of putting the last hand to a work, I muttered, grumbled, and complained, cursing the hour that I first thought of going to Florence. I was indeed by this time sensible of my great loss in leaving France, and did not see or know what I had to hope from the Duke of Florence, because all I had done for him from the first to the last had been to my own loss; so, with great discontent, I exhibited my statue the next day.

But it so pleased God that as soon as ever my work was beheld by the populace, they set up so loud a shout of applause that I began to be somewhat comforted for the mortifications I had undergone; and there were sonnets in my praise every day upon the gate, the language of which was extremely elegant and poetical. The very day on which I exhibited my work there were above twenty sonnets set up, containing the most hyperbolical praises of it. Even after I had covered it again, every day a number of verses, with Latin odes and Greek poems, were published on the occasion; for it was then vacation at the University of Pisa, and all the learned men and scholars belonging to that place vied with each other in writing encomiums on my performance. But what gave me the highest satisfaction, and encouraged me to hope most from the duke, was that even those of the profession—I mean sculptors and painters—emulated each other in commending me; and amongst others the admirable painter Jacopo da Pontormo, whom I esteemed above all the rest, and his friend, the excellent painter Bronzino, whom I valued still more. The latter, not satisfied with causing several panegyrics upon me to be pasted up, sent them to my house by his friend Sandrino. In these I was so highly praised, and in so elegant a style, that it afforded some alleviation for my past mortifications and trouble, and I made all the haste I could to put the last hand to my statue. The duke, though he had heard of the compliments paid me by this excellent school, said he was very glad I had met with so favourable a reception from

the public, for it would doubtless make me the more expeditious as well as more careful in putting the last hand to my work; but that I should not flatter myself, that when it was placed in such a manner as to be seen on all sides, the people would speak as advantageously of it as at present: on the contrary, they would then discover all the blemishes which it really had, and find many others which it had not; so that I must put on the armour of patience. These words Bandinello said to the duke, when he spoke of the works of Andrea Verrocchio, who made the beautiful statues of Christ and San Tommaso in bronze, which are to be seen in the front of Orsanmichele, and of many other works, and even of the admirable David of the divine Michael Angelo Buonarroti, declaring that they appeared to advantage only when seen before; and never afterwards spoke of his own Hercules, and the many satirical verses that were posted up against him, and all the ill that was said of him by the populace. All this made the duke, who put too much confidence in him, express himself in the above manner concerning my statue; and he no doubt thought it would have had much the same end, because the envious Bandinello was constantly insinuating something against it. One time, when that villain Bernardone the broker happened to be present, he, to add weight to the words of Bandinello, said to the duke: "You must know, my lord, that to make large figures is quite a different thing from working small ones; I do not say but that Benvenuto has been happy enough in the latter, but you will find his great statue will have different success." With these insinuations he mixed many more equally malicious, performing his odious office of a spy, in which he told many untruths.

At last, however, as it pleased the Almighty, I completely finished my work, and on a Thursday morning exhibited it fully. Just before the break of day so great a crowd gathered about it, that it is almost impossible for me to give the reader an idea of their number, and they

all seemed to vie with each other who should praise it most. The duke stood at a lower window of the palace, just over the gate, and being half-concealed inside, heard all that was said concerning the work. After he had listened several hours, he left the window, highly pleased, and turning to his favourite, Signor Sforza, spoke to him thus: "Sforza, go to Benvenuto, and tell him from me that he has given me higher satisfaction than I ever expected. Let him know, at the same time, that I shall reward him in such a manner as will excite his surprise; so bid him be of good cheer." Signor Sforza came to me with this glorious embassy, by which I was highly rejoiced. During that whole day the people showed me to each other as a sort of prodigy. There happened to be then in Florence two gentlemen who were sent from the viceroy of Sicily to our duke upon business: these two worthy personages came up to me, with great eagerness and animation, in the great square, where I was shown to them, and, cap in hand, made me a long harangue, which would have been too great a panegyric even for a pope. I behaved as modestly as it was possible for me on the occasion; but they continued so long paying me compliments that I at last begged they would leave the square, because the populace crowded about to stare at me more than at my statue of Perseus. During their ceremonies and compliments, they went so far as to propose to me to go with them to Sicily, telling me that I should have no objection to their terms; at the same time they told me that brother Giovanangiolo, of the order of the Servi, had made them a fountain adorned with a variety of figures, which were vastly inferior to my Perseus, though they had made his fortune. Without letting them finish all they would have said on the occasion, I interrupted them in these terms: "I am very much surprised, gentlemen, that you should propose to me to quit the service of a duke, who is a greater lover and encourager of men of genius than any prince that ever lived; especially as I

have at the same time the advantage of being in my own country, the first school in the world for the polite arts, and all works of ingenuity. If the love of gain had been my ruling passion, I might have stayed in France, in the service of a great monarch who allowed me a pension of a thousand crowns a year, and paid me for every piece of work I did for him besides, insomuch that annually I had above four thousand crowns coming in to me, and I left in Paris the works of four years." Thus I put a stop to their proposal, and returned them thanks for the praise they bestowed on me, the greatest reward that can be conferred for laudable undertakings. I added that they had so inflamed my zeal to signalise myself that I hoped in a few years to exhibit another work, which I flattered myself would give the school of Florence still greater satisfaction than it had received from my present performance. The two gentlemen were for renewing the conversation; but making them a low bow, I very respectfully took my leave.

Having let two days pass, and perceiving that my fame increased continually, I went to pay the duke a visit, who said to me with great complaisance: "My friend Benvenuto, you have given me the highest satisfaction imaginable; but I have promised to reward you in such a manner as shall excite your surprise, and, what is more, I am resolved not to defer it so much as a day." Upon receiving these great assurances, I raised up all my mental and corporeal faculties to the Almighty, and returned Him my sincere and hearty thanks; at the same instant I shed tears of joy, and kissing the hem of his excellency's garment, addressed him thus: "My most noble lord, liberal patron of the arts, and of those that cultivate them, I beg it as a favour of your excellency that you would give me leave to retire for a week to return thanks to the Supreme Being; for I know how hard I have worked, and am sensible that my faith has prevailed with God to grant me His assistance. On account of this, and

every other miraculous succour afforded me by the Divine power, I propose going a pilgrimage for a week, to express my acknowledgment to the Eternal Being, who ever assists those who sincerely call upon Him." The duke then asked me whither I intended to go: I made answer "that I should the next day set out, and go first to Vallombrosa, then to Camaldoli, and the Hermitage, and afterwards continue my pilgrimage to the baths of Santa Maria, and perhaps as far as Sestile, for I had been informed that there were fine antiquities in that place. I should then return by St. Francesco della Vernia, and, never ceasing to give thanks to the Almighty, should come home joyfully to serve his excellency." The duke thereupon said to me, with great cheerfulness, "Go, and return quickly: I am pleased with your intention; but give me a couplet in remembrance of you, and leave the rest to me." I immediately composed four lines, in which I returned his excellency thanks for his promised favours, and gave them to Signor Sforza, who put them into the duke's hand in my name. The latter, after perusing them, gave them again to Signor Sforza, with these words, "Be sure you show them to me every day; for if Benvenuto should, upon his return, find that I had neglected his business, he would be the death of me, beyond all doubt." His excellency then laughed, and Signor Sforza told him he would be sure to put him in mind. These very words the latter repeated to me in the evening, telling me that the duke had ordered him to put him in mind of me, and mentioning, at the same time, all that had passed on the occasion. Signor Sforza could not help laughing all the time, while he expressed much pleasure at the high esteem in which I was held by the duke. At parting he said to me, with great good humour, "Benvenuto, go, and return with speed; for I envy your happiness."

CHAPTER XLIV

I LEFT Florence, incessantly singing psalms and saying prayers to the honour and glory of God, during the whole journey, in which I had great pleasure, as it was then summer, and the weather very fine; so pleased was I with the country, in which I had never travelled before, that my delight proved equal to my wonder. My guide was a young man from the mountains of the Bagno, who worked in my shop, and whose name was Cæsar. I met with a very kind reception at the baths from his father and the whole family, amongst whom was an old man above seventy, a very agreeable companion; he was by profession a physician and surgeon, and had a smattering of alchemy. This worthy man proved to me that the mountains of the Bagno contained a mine of gold and silver, and showed me several curiosities in that country; so that I never in my life enjoyed greater pleasure than in his society. Being at last grown quite familiar with me, he told me one day that he could not help communicating to me a thought of his, which, if his excellency would attend to us, he believed would turn highly to our advantage: what he meant was, that near Camaldoli there was a pass so open that Piero Strozzi could not only pass through it with ease, but might surprise the Castle of Poppi without any difficulty; and not satisfied with proving this to me in words, he took a leaf out of his pocket-book, upon which he had drawn so exact a plan of the whole country, as showed but too plainly that the danger from that pass was not at all imaginary. I took the plan, and immediately quitting the baths of Santa Maria, returned by the road of Prato Magno, and from San Francesco della Vernia, arrived at Florence.

As soon as I had pulled off my boots, I repaired to the palace, and when I reached the abbey I met the duke, who was just coming from the Podesta's palace; he received me

most graciously, but at the same time expressing some surprise, asking me how I came to return so soon, for he did not expect me that week. I answered that I was returned to serve his excellency, otherwise should have gladly made a stay of several days in the delightful countries where I had been rambling. "What business of importance," continued the duke, "has caused your speedy return?"—"My lord," I replied, "I have something of great consequence to show you;" so I went with him to the palace, where he conducted me to a private apartment. I told him all I had heard, and showed him the sketch I had brought with me. He appeared to be highly pleased with my attention; and upon my observing to his excellency that it was absolutely necessary to find an immediate remedy for an affair of such importance, the duke seemed to muse for a while, and then told me he had concluded an accommodation with the Duke of Urbino, who would take care of that matter; but this he desired me to keep to myself. I then returned home, after having received many demonstrations of his favour.

The next day I made my appearance at the palace, and the duke, after a short conversation, said to me very pleasantly: "To-morrow I will without fail despatch your business; so be of good cheer." Thinking myself sure of being provided for, I with impatience waited for the morrow. The wished-for day being arrived, I repaired to the palace; but as it generally happens that bad news is sooner communicated than good, Signor Jacopo Guidi, his excellency's secretary, called me aside with his wry mouth and authoritative voice, and drawing himself up as stiff and formal as if he had been frozen, told me "that the duke was desirous to know from myself what I asked for my Perseus." Quite disconcerted and surprised at this question, I immediately answered that it was not customary with me to set a price upon my works, and that this request was not agreeable to the promise which his excellency had made me a few days before. The secretary, re-

his voice, said he expressly commanded me in the duke's name to tell what I expected for my statue, upon pain of totally forfeiting his excellency's favour. I, who not only expected some considerable recompense in consequence of the caresses lavished on me by the duke, but likewise flattered myself that I had entirely gained his good graces, and never desired any higher reward than his favour, upon meeting with this unexpected treatment, aggravated by the insolence of this waspish secretary, was incensed to such a degree that I declared if the duke was to give me ten thousand crowns for my statue it would be less than it was worth, and if I had expected to be bargained with in such a mercenary way I should never have stayed at Florence. The spiteful secretary thereupon gave me a deal of opprobrious language, which I returned in the same style.

The very next day I went to pay my court to his excellency, who beckoned to me: upon my approaching, he told me angrily that cities and magnificent royal palaces might be built for ten thousand ducats. I bowed, and answered without hesitation that his excellency might find numbers of men capable of building cities and palaces, but perhaps he might not in the whole world find another artist able to make him such a statue of Perseus as mine; and having thus expressed myself, I departed. A few days after the duchess sent for me, and desired me to make her arbitress of the dispute between the duke and me, declaring that she would so contrive matters that I should have entire satisfaction. In return to this kind offer I answered that I never desired any higher reward for my labours than his excellency's good graces; that he had promised me his favour, and it was unnecessary that I should then renew to their excellencies the declaration which I had made on the very first day that I began to serve them; I added that even if his excellency had given me but twopence for my trouble I should think myself happy if he did not deprive me of his good opinion. The duchess, smiling, answered

me thus: "Benvenuto, your best way would be to follow my advice;" and so she left me.

I thought I could not do better than express myself in the humble manner above related; I was, notwithstanding, mistaken, for, though the duchess had had some difference with me, she was possessed of a great deal of good-nature, and certainly meant well. At this time I was intimately acquainted with Girolamo degli Albizzi, commissary to the militia, who one day said to me: "Benvenuto, it appears highly expedient that we should endeavour to find some method of accommodating this dispute between the duke and you; and if you will put that confidence in me, I dare say I shall find means to set all to rights; for as the duke is seriously offended, this may otherwise turn out to your disadvantage; a word to the wise is sufficient: I can say no more at present." As I had been apprised of this, since the duchess had the above conversation with me, by one who perhaps had an ill intention in so doing, and who said he came by his information accidentally, I replied in a passion: "I could for less than twopence find in my heart to throw my Perseus away, and that would completely put an end to the dispute at once." However, on account of the suspicion I had of the person from whom I had my information, I told Girolamo degli Albizzi that I left the whole affair to him, and should readily agree to any proposal of his, provided I might continue in favour with the duke. This worthy person, who was thoroughly acquainted with the profession of a soldier, especially with training and disciplining the country militia, had no kind of taste for the polite arts, nor consequently for that of sculpture; so he spoke concerning me to the duke, told him that I had left the whole affair to him, and had requested him to speak to his excellency in my favour. The duke replied that he would also entrust the whole affair to him, and abide by whatever he should determine. Girolamo thereupon wrote a very ingenious letter in which he spoke greatly in my behalf; and his determination was that the duke should

give me three thousand five hundred gold crowns, not as a gratification for so elegant a piece of work, but towards my present support; that I should be satisfied with that sum; together with many more words, which had all the same tendency. The duke subscribed to this with pleasure; I was, however, very far from being satisfied.

When the duchess heard of this she said it would have been better for me if I had left the affair to her, for she would have procured me five thousand gold crowns. And one day that I went to the palace, her excellency said the very same thing to me in the presence of Signor Alamanno Salviati, and turned me into ridicule, telling me that I deserved all the bad success I had met with. The duke gave orders that the money should be paid me by monthly sums of a hundred gold crowns. Afterwards Signor Antonio de Nobili, who was commissioned to pay me, began to give me only fifty, and after that again he reduced his payments to five-and-twenty, and sometimes did not pay me at all. When I perceived these delays, I mildly expostulated with Signor Antonio, and begged to know for what reason he discontinued my payments: he answered me civilly; but I thought that in his answer he went a little beyond the bounds of probability; for first of all (I leave it to the reader to judge) he told me that the cause of discontinuing my payments was that money began to be very scarce at court; but he added that as soon as ever he was in cash he would pay me. He at the same time loudly declared that if he were to neglect paying me he should be one of the greatest villains breathing! I was surprised to hear him use such an expression: he promised that he would pay me as soon as ever it was in his power; but his actions proved quite contrary to his declarations. Seeing myself thus hardly treated, I grew very angry, and giving him a great deal of harsh and severe language, put him in mind of all he had promised. He died soon after, and there still remain due to me five hundred gold crowns, now towards the close

of the year 1566. I then ceased to receive any remains of my salary, and thought they would entirely neglect to pay it, as near three years had elapsed. But the duke was about this time attacked by a dangerous disorder, and, perceiving that remedies administered by his physicians did him no service, he had recourse to the Almighty, and thereupon ordered that all to whom he was indebted should receive what money was due to them. I was paid amongst the rest, but not the remainder of what was owing to me for my statue of Perseus.

I had almost formed a resolution to say nothing more of my ill-fated Perseus; but as a remarkable accident lays me under a necessity of again making mention of it, I must for a while resume my past narrative. I thought what I did was for the best, when I told the duchess that I could not compromise what was not in my power; for I had assured the duke that I should be satisfied with whatever his excellency should think proper to give me. This I said with a view of ingratiating myself, and with some little appearance of humility I sought every possible method to appease him. For a few days before he had made the above-mentioned agreement with Albizzi he appeared to be very angry with me; and the reason was that, happening to complain to him of some ill usage that I had received from Signor Alfonso Quistello, and Signor Jacopo Polverino, who belonged to the treasury, and still more of Signor Giambattista Bandini of Volterra, I laid my charge against them with some appearance of warmth. I then perceived that the duke was highly incensed, and threw out these angry expressions: "This puts me in mind of your statue of Perseus, for which you asked me ten thousand crowns; interest has too much sway over you; I will get an estimate taken of its value, and pay you whatever it is rated at." I answered boldly with some emotion, which is by no means proper when we have to deal with personages of high rank. "How is it possible for a

proper estimate to be taken of my statue, when there is not a man in Florence who is an adequate judge of its merit?" The duke was still more provoked at this, and uttered a great many passionate expressions. "If there be a man in Florence," said he, "able to make one like it, that man must be capable of forming a proper estimate of it." When he said this, he had Bandinello, cavalier of St. Jacopo, in his eye. "My lord," replied I, "your excellency has given me an opportunity of executing, at the greatest school in the world, a noble and most arduous work, which has been more highly extolled than any other statue hitherto exhibited before that divine assembly; and what encourages me most is, that those excellent men who understand and profess the business, pass as favourable a judgment on my performance as the rest: for example, Bronzino, the painter, has exerted himself, and written four sonnets on the occasion, using the most noble and sublime expressions that could possibly enter into his conception; and it is in consequence of the great encomiums bestowed on my work by this extraordinary person that the whole city has so greatly admired it; and I will venture to affirm that if he were to cultivate sculpture as he does painting, he would very probably be able to equal it. I must also inform your excellency that my master, Michael Angelo Buonarroti, could likewise have made such a one when he was younger than he is at present; it would, however, have cost him as much trouble as mine has done me; but now that he is advanced in years, he is utterly incapable of producing anything like it, so that I do not think there is an artist living capable of equalling my work. Thus has my performance received the greatest reward that it was possible for me to wish; and still more so as your excellency has not only declared yourself satisfied with it, but has even bestowed upon it higher praises than anybody else: what greater or more honourable reward could I possibly desire? I will therefore affirm that you could not pay me in more

glorious coin, nor with any sort of treasure equal to that; so that I am amply paid, and thank your excellency with all my heart."—"That is so far from being the case," answered the duke, "that you do not think I have treasure sufficient to satisfy you for your performance; but I assure you I will pay you much more than it is worth." I replied that I did not expect any further recompense from his excellency, but thought myself amply rewarded by that which I received from the school of Florence; and with that I should presently depart, if it pleased God, without ever returning to the house which his excellency had given me, or ever more desiring to see Florence.

We were just then at Santa Felicità, and the duke was returning to his palace. Upon my uttering these warm and passionate expressions he turned to me and said angrily, "Don't go away; I say again, don't go away upon any account;" so that I accompanied him to the palace somewhat frightened. His excellency thereupon sent for Bartolini, the Archbishop of Pisa, and likewise for Signor Pandolfo della Stufa, and desired them to order Baccio Bandinello in his name to examine my statue of Perseus, and value it, because he proposed paying me exactly according to its worth. The two worthy persons above named immediately found Baccio Bandinello, and delivered their message to him; who said he knew very well the value of the work, but as he had had many differences with me, he did not choose to concern himself in my affairs. The two gentlemen then added: "The duke has desired us to tell you that he commands you, upon pain of his displeasure, to set a price upon the statue, and you may take two or three days to examine it attentively, if you think proper; after which you are to inform us what the artist deserves for his trouble." He thereupon made answer that he had examined the statue attentively, and as he could not avoid obeying the duke's commands, was obliged to declare that the work had proved so admirable a masterpiece that, in his

opinion, it was worth sixteen thousand gold crowns and upwards. The gentlemen immediately informed the duke of this decision, who was highly displeased at it: they likewise told me of it; but I said that I would by no means accept of the praises of Bandinello, as that man spoke ill of everybody. These words of mine were repeated to the duke, and the duchess again wished me to leave the whole affair to her. All that I have here related is strictly true: it would therefore have been most advisable for me to submit the whole affair to the duchess, and by so doing I should probably have been speedily paid, and have received a gratification besides.

The duke gave me to understand by Signor Lelio Torelli, his auditor, that he wanted me to represent certain historical pieces in a basso-rilievo of bronze round the choir of Sta. Maria del Fiore; but as this choir was a work of Bandinello's, I was unwilling to ennoble his petty performances by my labours; though the plan of the choir was not his, as he had not the least knowledge of architecture, but that of Giuliano, son of Baccio d'Agnolo, a carpenter, who spoiled the cupola: it is sufficient to say of it that it has no sort of beauty. For both these reasons I wished to decline being concerned in the work; though I humbly told the duke that I was upon all occasions ready to obey his excellency's commands. Soon after this he ordered the overseers of Sta. Maria del Fiore to talk to me about the affair; for he proposed to allow me only my salary of two hundred crowns a year, and that in all other respects the overseers were to supply me out of the fund assigned for carrying on the work. I therefore repaired to the overseers, who told me the orders they had received from the duke; and as I thought I might freely acquaint them with all my reasons for disapproving the work proposed, I began to prove that so many pieces of history represented in bronze would occasion a prodigious expense, and that it would be nothing else but squandering away money idly. I laid before them all the causes that induced

me to think so, and they were very capable of conceiving the full force of what I alleged: the first was that the manner in which the choir had been laid out was quite irregular, contrived without judgment, without the least appearance of art, convenience, gracefulness, or design; the other was, that the historical pieces, by being placed so low, would be beneath the eye, and would make a kennel for dogs, and be constantly defiled with all sorts of ordure. For these reasons I declared that I did not choose upon any account to be concerned in the work, that I might not lose the remainder of my best days without serving his excellency, whom I was so ambitious to serve and to oblige: therefore if he had a desire to employ me, he should rather order me to make the middle door of the church of Sta. Maria del Fiore, which would be a performance worth seeing, and would do his excellency much more honour than the other. I added that I was willing to enter into a contract, that in case I did not in the execution surpass the finest door of the church of San Giovanni, I should ask no reward for my trouble; but in case I finished it according to my promise, I consented that it should be valued, and even then I should be satisfied with a thousand crowns less than it was estimated at by those of the profession. The workmen being highly pleased with what I proposed, went to speak of it to the duke, and amongst others Piero Salviati attended: they thought that what they were going to propose would prove highly agreeable to his excellency. It proved, however, quite the reverse; for he said that I was for doing the very contrary of what he would have me do: so Piero left the duke without coming to any conclusion.

When I heard what had passed between them, I waited on the duke, who seemed to be somewhat offended with me. I begged he would condescend so far as to hear what I had to say in my defence, and he promised me he would: so I began to give him a full account of the whole affair,

and used so many arguments to explain the nature of the thing to his excellency, and convince him that to engage in such an undertaking would be only throwing away money, that I greatly softened him, and then took occasion to observe that if he did not choose to have the door I mentioned, it was absolutely necessary to make two pulpits to the choir, and that they would be two noble works, and do him honour: I added that I would adorn them with a number of historical pieces in basso-rilievo of bronze, together with a variety of other embellishments. In this manner did I appease his excellency, who gave me orders to begin the models without delay. I made a variety of models, and took a great deal of pains on the occasion: amongst others, I made one with eight sides (octagonal) more carefully than any of the rest, and thought it much better adapted to the purpose it was intended to answer than the others. I carried the models several times to the palace, and his excellency at length ordered Signor Cæsar, his wardrobe keeper, to desire me to leave them. I perceived afterwards that the duke had made choice of the very worst. One day his excellency sent for me, and in some conversation which we had concerning these models, I proved to him by many arguments that the model with eight faces was the best calculated for the purpose, and by much the most beautiful of them all. The duke answered that he chose I should make it quadrangular, because he liked that form best: he conversed with me, however, a long time upon the subject with good humour. I did not fail to say on the occasion everything that my knowledge of the art suggested; and whether the duke at last became sensible that I spoke the truth, or was resolved to have the thing his own way, a considerable time passed without his mentioning it to me again.

CHAPTER XLV

About this time the great block of marble for a statue of Neptune was brought up the river Arno, and thence by the Grieve, and carried through the road which leads to Poggio a Cajano, that it might afterwards be conveyed the more easily by that level road to Florence, where I went to see it. And though I knew to a certainty that the duchess had by her interest procured it for the Cavalier Bandinello, yet not through any envy to that artist, but moved to compassion for the destiny of the unfortunate marble, I took a view of it, measured its height and thickness every way, and at my return to Florence made several little models for it. I must here observe, by the way, that when we endeavour to preserve any great thing from evil, it often meets with a worse fate than that from which we rescued it; as was the case of this marble, by falling into the hands of Bartolommeo Ammannato, of whom I shall speak in a proper place. Having made the little models above mentioned, I repaired to Poggio a Cajano, where the duke and duchess were with the prince their son: I found them all at table, and the duke dined in private with the duchess, so that I began to enter into conversation with the prince. As I talked with him a considerable time, the duke, who was in an apartment hard by, overheard us, and in a very polite manner sent for me. As soon as I came into the presence of their excellencies, the duchess began to converse with me with great good humour: I contrived to turn the subject of the conversation to the block of marble.

I observed that their ancestors had rendered the noble school of Florence so illustrious, by exciting emulation amongst the men of genius in the several different professions: it was this that produced the admirable cupola, the beautiful doors of the church of San Giovanni, and so

many other noble temples and statues, reflecting such high honour on this city, which never could boast such ornaments since the days of the ancients. The duchess peevishly replied that she knew very well what I would be at, and desired I would never speak again of that marble in her presence, as nothing could give her greater offence. "I, then, offend you," said I, "madam, by becoming an agent for your excellencies, and exerting myself to the utmost to have you well served. Consider seriously, that if your excellencies are willing to permit every artist to produce a model of Neptune, even though you are resolved to give the preference to Bandinello's, this will excite him, for his own honour, to exert himself with more ardour in making a beautiful model, than he would have done if he had had no competitor: thus will your excellencies be better served, and will avoid discouraging your excellent school; and will likewise see who applies closest to this admirable art—I mean in the grand style; and you will appear both to delight in it, and be judges of its beauties." The duchess then told me, in a passion, that I tired her patience; that she was resolved the marble should be Bandinello's; adding that the duke himself was determined that Bandinello should have it. When the duchess ceased speaking, the duke, who had continued silent all the time, replied: "It is now twenty years since I caused this fine piece of marble to be dug up out of the quarry on purpose for Bandinello, and therefore it is my pleasure that he should have it, and it shall be his." I thereupon turned to the duke, and begged it as a favour that he would give me leave just to say four words to him for his excellency's advantage. The duke bade me say whatever I thought proper, telling me that he would listen with attention. I then said: "You are to understand, my lord, that the marble of which Bandinello made Hercules and Cacus was taken out of the quarry by the renowned Michael Angelo Buonarroti, who made for it a model of Samson with four

figures, which would have been one of the first pieces in the whole world; and your favourite Bandinello made of it only two figures, both ill executed, and put together in the most bungling manner. Therefore the admirable school of Florence still exclaims against the great injury that was done to that fine piece of marble. I really believe there were above a thousand sonnets posted up to ridicule that wretched performance, and I am sure your excellency remembers the thing very well. If, therefore, my worthy lord, the men to whose care that business was entrusted were so injudicious as to take so valuable a piece of marble from Michael Angelo, and give it to Bandinello, who spoiled it, as it evidently appears; can you ever think of suffering the same person to spoil this other much finer block, and not give it to some other artist of abilities capable of doing it justice? Give orders, my lord, for each artist to make a model; let them all be laid before the academy; your excellency will then hear its opinion concerning them, and with your usual judgment be able to choose the best: thus you will avoid throwing away your money, and discouraging a school which is now the most renowned in the world, and reflects such honour on your excellency." The duke, after having listened very attentively, rose on a sudden from table, and turning to me, said, "Go, my friend Benvenuto, make a model, and endeavour to win that fine piece of marble, for I am sensible that what you say is just." The duchess shook her head at me, and muttered something as if she were angry; but I, bowing to their excellencies, made all the haste I could to return to Florence, being quite impatient to begin the model.

The duke was no sooner arrived at Florence than, without giving me any previous notice, he came to my house, when I showed him two little models quite different from each other. He praised them both, but added that one of them pleased him much more than the other; and bidding me finish that which he was pleased with, told me

I should find my account in it. As his excellency had seen those made by Bandinello and the other artists, he greatly preferred mine to the rest, for so I was informed by several courtiers who had heard him. Amongst other circumstances worthy of being related, one was that the Cardinal di Santa Fiore being come to Florence, the duke carried him with him to Poggio a Cajano: by the way the cardinal seeing the piece of marble above mentioned, praised it highly, and asked who his excellency intended should work upon it. The duke answered, "My Benvenuto, who has drawn me an excellent model."

This was repeated to me by persons worthy of credit, and on that account I waited on the duchess, and carried her some pretty little trifles of my making, which her excellency liked very much. She asked me what I was at that time about. I answered: "Madam, I have undertaken one of the most laborious tasks in the world by way of amusement: the task I mean is a Christ crucified, of the whitest marble, upon a cross of the blackest, and as big as the life." Upon her asking me what I proposed to do with it, I thus replied: "I assure you, madam, I would not sell it for two thousand ducats; for no man ever took so much pains with a piece of work; nor could I have undertaken to make such a one for any nobleman, for fear of discovering my want of capacity, and being put to confusion. I bought the marble with my own money, and kept a young man about two years to assist me; and what with purchasing marble and tools, and paying him a salary, the work has stood me in above three hundred crowns, so that I again declare I would not give it for two thousand ducats: but if your excellency will do me one favour, I will freely make you a present of it: all I desire is that you will be neutral with respect to the models of a Neptune which the duke has ordered to be made of the great marble." The duchess answered with great indignation, "It seems then you neither value my interest nor my opposition?" I replied: "You quite mis-

take me, madam; I know very well the consequence of both: why else do I offer you what I value at two thousand ducats? But I rely so much on my diligence and acquired knowledge, that I have good hopes of winning the prize, even if it were disputed with me by the great Michael Angelo Buonarroti, from whom alone I learned all I know: and I would much rather that he who knows so much should make a model, than the others that know so little; for much honour might be won by entering the lists with my renowned master; but there can be very little in contending with inferior artists."

When I had made an end of speaking, the duchess rose angrily; and I returned to my model, working at it with all assiduity. As soon as I had finished it, the duke came to see it, accompanied by two ambassadors, one from the Duke of Ferrara, the other from the republic of Lucca. My model gave high satisfaction, and the duke said to the ambassadors, "Benvenuto deserves the prize." Thereupon both the noble personages complimented me highly, especially the ambassador of the republic of Lucca, who was a man of learning, and had taken the degree of doctor. I retired to some distance that they might speak their sentiments freely. When I found they were favourable to me, I approached, and turning to the duke, said: "My lord, your excellency should have recourse to another expedient, which is to give orders that each artist should make a model of clay exactly of the same size as the marble statue; by which means your excellency will be much better able to tell who deserves the preference. And I must further take the liberty to observe, that if you give the prize to an artist who is not deserving of it, you will not so much injure the person that has merit as yourself, for both loss and shame will result to you from such a decision: whereas, by a contrary conduct, that is, by giving it to him that is worthy of it, you will in the first place acquire great reputation; you next will lay out your money to advantage, and men of genius will think

that you delight in the polite arts, and are a judge of abilities." When I had made an end of speaking, the duke shrugged up his shoulders; and as he was just going, the ambassador from Lucca said to him, "My lord, this Benvenuto of yours is a man of great spirit." The duke replied: "He has more spirit than you are aware of; and it would have been well for him if he had less, for he would then have obtained many gratifications which he has missed." These words were repeated to me by the ambassador, who at the same time chid me for not acting the courtier better. I answered that I wished well to my lord, was his affectionate and faithful servant, but could not stoop to the arts of flattery and adulation.

Some weeks after, Bandinello died, and it was generally thought that, besides his disorder, the grief which he felt at losing the fine piece of marble, out of which the statue of Neptune was to be made, greatly contributed to hasten his dissolution. Bandinello had heard of my making the marble crucifix, of which I have spoken above: he thereupon took a small piece of marble, and made that figure of Piety, which is to be seen in the church of the Nunziata. As I had dedicated my crucifix to Santa Maria Novella, and had already fixed up the irons to fasten it upon, I wanted nothing further but to erect, on the ground under the crucifix, a little monument to be buried in after my death. The monks told me they could not grant my request, without asking leave of the overseers of the building: "Why, then," said I, "did you not consult the overseers before you permitted me to fix the irons in this place for setting up my crucifix?" For this reason I resolved not to give my work to this church of Santa Maria Novella, though the overseers afterwards came and made me an apology. I therefore repaired to the church of the Nunziata, and told the monks that I would make them a present of my crucifix, in the same manner as I had proposed bestowing it on the church of Sta. Maria Novella; upon which the good brethren of the Nunziata

bade me set up my crucifix in their church, and erect my tomb in whatever manner I thought proper. Bandinello, being informed of this, made all the haste he could to finish his figure of Piety, and requested the duchess to grant him the chapel formerly belonging to the Pazzi, which he at last with great difficulty obtained; and as soon as he accomplished his desire, he erected his tomb in it, which was not completely finished when he died. The duchess then said "that she had befriended him during his life, and would continue her regard for him even after his decease; for though he was no more, Benvenuto must never expect to have the marble in his possession." Bernardone the broker, happening one day to meet me in town, told me that the duchess had given away the marble, upon which I exclaimed: "O ill-fated stone! hard, indeed, was thy lot in falling into the hands of Bandinello! but it is a hundred times more deplorable now thou art in those of Ammannato!"

I had received directions from the duke to make a model of clay, of the same size as the statue of marble was intended: at the same time he ordered me to be furnished with wood and clay, and a little partition to be erected in the apartment where I had made my Perseus: he likewise paid the wages of a workman who was to assist me. I set about my model with the utmost assiduity, made the skeleton in wood with the greatest exactness, and brought my work happily to a conclusion. I gave myself no further trouble about making the statue; for I knew that the duchess was determined that I should not have the fine block of marble, and therefore I was in some measure indifferent about it. I however took pleasure in exerting myself as I did, promising myself that as soon as I had finished it, the duchess, who did not want discernment, would, after she had seen the work, be sorry that she had done both the marble and herself so much injustice.

Giovanni Fiammingo made one model in the cloisters

of St. Croce; another was done by Vincenzio Danti, of Perugia, in the house of Signor Ottavio de' Medici; another was begun by the son of Moschino, at Pisa; and another again was made by Bartolommeo Ammannato in my working-room, which we had divided between us. When I had well bronzed it over, and was going to finish the head, the duke came from the palace, with Giorgetto the painter, to Ammannato's apartment, in order to view the statue of Neptune, upon which Giorgetto had worked several days with his own hands, in conjunction with Ammannato and all his journeymen. I was informed that when his excellency saw it he appeared to be by no means satisfied; and though Giorgetto, with his chatter, wanted to persuade him into a good opinion of the work, the duke shook his head, and turning to Signor Giorgio Stefano, bade him go ask Benvenuto whether his great model was in such forwardness that he could let him have a sight of it. Stefano thereupon, in a very kind and polite manner, delivered me this message from the duke; adding that if I did not think my work would yet bear inspection, I might say so without reserve, as the duke was well aware that I had not been properly seconded in an undertaking of such importance. I answered "that I should be glad of the favour of his excellency's presence; that even if my work were not in any great forwardness, so penetrating a genius as his excellency could easily, from the specimen, form a judgment of what it would prove when entirely finished." The gentleman delivered the message to the duke, who came with great cheerfulness. No sooner had he entered the room and cast his eye upon my work but he appeared to be highly pleased with it; he examined it on all sides, fixing particularly upon the four principal points of view, just as a complete artist might have done; he then showed, by many gestures, that he was highly pleased with it, and said nothing further but, "Benvenuto, you have the last coat to lay on still." At length he turned to his

attendants, and spoke of my performance in the most advantageous terms, declaring that the little model which he saw at my house pleased him greatly, but that this work of mine had far surpassed that model.

As it pleased God, who makes all things co-operate to our advantage (I mean to the advantage of those who acknowledge and believe in His Divine Majesty), about this time an old rogue, from Vicchio, whose name was Pier Maria of Anterigoli, and his surname Sbietta, offered to sell me a farm for my natural life, that is, to sell me an annuity. This man followed the business of a grazier, and, as he was related to Signor Guido Guidi the physician, who is now chief magistrate of Pescia, I readily listened to his proposal. This farm I did not choose to go to see, being impatient to finish my model of the great statue of Neptune: besides, there was no occasion for my seeing it, as he only sold me the income of it, and had given me a written account of the measures of grain, wine, oil, corn, chestnuts, and other commodities, the produce of the farm; all which, I took for granted, must, as times then were, be worth above a hundred gold crowns; so I paid him six hundred and fifty crowns for them, including the duties. After he had given me a writing, signed with his own hand, which imported that he would, during my natural life, take care to see me paid the income of the above farm, I thought it unnecessary to go and take a view of it, but inquired whether the said Sbietta and his brother Filippo were good men, such as might be depended upon; and was assured by several of their acquaintances that they were, and I might feel perfectly secure. We agreed to send for Pier Francesco Bertoldi the notary; and the first thing I put into his hand was the written account of what Sbietta was to make good to me, thinking that it should by all means enter into the contract; but the notary who drew it up busied himself with two-and-twenty different articles, which were mentioned to him by Sbietta, and, as I thought, seemed to forget the main part of the contract,

which was the payment of the annuity. Whilst the notary was busied in writing, I worked on, and as he was several hours in drawing the deed, in the meantime I made a considerable part of the head of my Neptune. The instrument being at last entirely completed, Sbietta began to lavish caresses on me, as I in my turn did on him. He made me presents of kids, cheeses, capons, cakes, and a variety of different fruits, till at last I began to be quite ashamed. In return for these favours, every time he came to Florence I took him home with me from his inn, and he was frequently accompanied by some of his relations, whom I likewise invited to my house.

One day he told me in a jocular manner that it was a shame that after I had bought a farm, and several weeks had passed since I made the purchase, I could not discontinue my business for a few days and go and see it. Such an effect had his insinuations on my mind that I at last, to my misfortune, did comply with his desire. Sbietta received me with such caresses and outward ceremony that he could not have done more for a duke, and his wife seemed to be still fonder of me than her husband; which continued for a time, till what he and his brother Filippo had concerted between them had taken effect. At the same time I went on with my work, and had already sketched out the whole with an exactness unknown to any artist before me: so that, though I was sure not to get the marble, for the reasons assigned, I thought myself upon the point of finishing and exhibiting it in the public square for my own satisfaction. The weather was warm and pleasant, so that being much importuned by the two villains above mentioned, I set out from my villa on Wednesday, which was doubly a holiday, for Trespiano, and ate a good breakfast on my arrival at Vicchio. I met Filippo the priest, at the very gate of Vicchio, who seemed to know where I was going, and to be extremely fond of my company. He conducted me to Sbietta's house, where was his shameless wife, who likewise seemed lavish of her

caresses to me: I made her a present of a straw hat, and she declared that she had never seen a finer. Sbietta happened not to be then at home. Evening approaching, we all supped together very cheerfully; and when it was time to retire, I was shown into a handsome apartment, where I slept in an exceeding good bed, and my two servants were accommodated in a manner agreeable to their station. The same caresses were repeated when I rose in the morning. I went to take a view of my farm, with which I was highly pleased, and a certain quantity of corn and all sorts of grain were given me. I then returned to Vicchio, and Filippo said to me at our parting: "Benvenuto, don't be under any apprehensions; for though you have not received as much as was promised you, you must not be disheartened, for you will meet with an ample compensation, as you have honest people to deal with. I must, however, caution you against yon labourer, whom we have turned off, because he is a rogue." This labourer, whose name was Mariano Rosselli, often said to me: "Take care of yourself, or you will know to your cost, who amongst us is the greatest villain." When that country-fellow spoke to me in this manner, he smiled archly and shook his head, as much as to say: "You will one day find that I speak the truth!"

I was guilty of an error in judgment, but was not at all mistaken in what happened to me. Returning from my farm, which is about two miles distant from Vicchio towards the mountain, I met Filippo the priest, who received me with his usual caresses; so we breakfasted together. I then went to take a walk about the town of Vicchio, and the market was already begun. I perceived that I was stared at by all the inhabitants of the place, as an object they were not at all accustomed to; above all by a worthy man who had lived many years in the town, and whose wife made bread for sale. This honest person had, at about a mile's distance, some lands of his own, though he chose to live in that manner: he rented a house of mine

in Vicchio, which fell to me with the farm known by the name of the Fountain. As we happened to fall into conversation, he said to me: "I live in your house, and will pay you your rent when it becomes due; or if you choose to receive it beforehand you may, for I am resolved we shall have no disputes." Whilst we were thus talking together, I perceived that the man several times fixed his eyes upon me attentively; so I could not help saying to him: "Dear Giovanni, why do you look at me with such earnestness?" The worthy man made answer: "I will tell you with all my heart, if you promise upon your honour not to discover your author." I solemnly promised him that I would not. He thereupon continued: "You must understand, then, this vile priest, Signor Filippo, a few days ago went about making his boasts of the great feats of his brother Sbietta, and declaring that he had sold a farm of his for life to an old man, who would never see the end of the year. You have a number of villains to deal with; therefore take care of yourself, and be constantly upon your guard: I say no more."

In my walks up and down the town, I met Giambattista Santini, and both he and I were invited to supper by the priest. It was then between five and six, and supper had been ordered at this early hour on my account, for I had declared my intention of returning in the evening to Trespiano. Supper was, therefore, prepared in all haste, and Sbietta's wife was very active on the occasion, as was likewise one Cecchino Buti, a servant of theirs. As soon as the salads were dressed, and the guests began to sit down to table, the villain of a priest made a sort of a wry face, and said: "I must ask pardon of you all, but I cannot possibly have the pleasure of supping with you, for an affair of great consequence has since happened, in which my brother Sbietta is concerned; and as he is not in the way himself, I am under a necessity of supplying his place." We all pressed him to stay, but not being able to prevail on him to alter his purpose, we sat down to supper.

As soon as we had eaten the salads off certain little dishes, the boiled meat beginning to be served about, porringers were distributed to all the guests. Santino, who sat opposite to me at table, said: "They give you napkins quite different from the rest: did you ever see finer?" I told him that I had never once perceived it. He then bade me call to the wife of Sbietta, who, with Cecchino Buti, ran up and down in a constant hurry, and desire her to sit down at table. I used so many entreaties that I at last prevailed on the woman to take her place. She was sorry, she said, we did not like our supper, which appeared by our eating so little. After having several times praised the entertainment, assuring her that I had never tasted anything better, or with a better appetite, I at last told her I had eaten enough. I could not immediately guess why she pressed me so earnestly to eat. When we had done supper it was past eight o'clock, and I had a mind to return that night to Trespiano, in order to have it in my power to resume my business in the morning. So I took my leave of the rest of the guests, and having returned the hostess thanks, set out upon my journey.

I had scarcely travelled three miles when I felt my stomach burn dreadfully, and was tormented with such pangs that I thought it an age till I arrived at my farm of Trespiano. I with great difficulty reached the place that night, and immediately went to bed. The whole night I had no rest, my bowels being violently disordered. No sooner was it broad daylight than I felt my brain all on fire. I soon found reason to conclude that I had eaten something of a poisonous nature, and began to revolve within myself what it could possibly be. I recollected the dishes and porringers that were given me by Sbietta's wife, which appeared so different from those set before the rest of the company. I at the same time called to mind that the designing priest, Sbietta's brother, after having taken so much pains to make me welcome, did not choose to stay to sup with us. It further occurred to

my memory that this priest had boasted of his brother's having made a fine bargain, in selling a farm for life to an old man who would never see the end of the year; for these words had been repeated to me by the worthy del Sardella: so I concluded that they had given me in a porringer of sauce, which was very high seasoned, and extremely palatable, a dose of sublimate, as sublimate produces all the symptoms with which my illness was attended. I never, indeed, was used to eat much sauce or savoury things with my victuals, but to be content with salt alone. I, however, took two spoonfuls of the sauce in question, as it was extremely relishing: and I recollected that Sbietta's wife had several times pressed me to eat of it; as likewise that they had recourse to a variety of artifices to make me take the destructive sublimate.

Though I found myself thus disordered, I went to work at my great model of Neptune, but my illness in a few days so overpowered me that I was confined to my bed. As soon as the duchess heard that I had been taken ill she ordered the unfortunate marble to be put into the hands of Bartolommeo Ammannato, who sent me word that I might do what I pleased with my model, for he had won the marble so much contested. I did not, upon hearing this, act like his master, Bandinello, who was used to launch out into a superfluity of words: I contented myself with saying that I had always guessed it would turn out so, and desired Bartolommeo to exert his utmost efforts in showing himself worthy of the favour which fortune had conferred on him. Thus I continued very ill, confined to my bed, and was attended by that skilful physician, Signor Francesco di Monte Varchi, and by a surgeon named Raffaello de' Pilli. The sublimate had so burnt up my bowels that I could not retain my food a moment; but as Signor Francesco found that the poison had entirely exhausted its power of hurting, for it was unable to subdue that strength of nature which he perceived to be in my constitution, he said to me one day:

"Benvenuto, return thanks to God: you have got the better of your disorder. Be under no apprehension, for I am resolved to cure you in spite of the villains who endeavoured to bereave you of life." Raffaello de' Pilli then cried out: "This will be one of the greatest and most difficult cures that was ever heard of. Do you know, Benvenuto, that you swallowed a whole spoonful of sublimate?" At these words Signor Francesco interrupting him, said: "Perhaps there was some poisonous insect in it." I then told them that I knew to a certainty what sort of poison it was, and who gave it me; and here we were all silent. They attended me above six months, and it was above a year before I was able to resume my business.

CHAPTER XLVI

About this time (October 1560), the duke went to Siena to make his public entry into that city, and Ammannato had repaired thither some months before to erect the triumphal arches; on this occasion a natural son of Ammannato's, who continued to occupy the room where he worked, removed a sort of veil, which I had thrown over my model of Neptune to keep it from being seen. I immediately went to make a complaint of this to Don Francesco, the duke's son, who always appeared to be my friend. I represented to him that they had uncovered my figure, which was still imperfect, but that, if it had been finished, it would have given me no concern at all. To this the prince answered, shaking his head: "Benvenuto, do not give yourself any trouble about covering the figure, for they think theirs much superior to yours; but if you require it to be kept covered, I will instantly give orders accordingly." To these words his excellency added many more highly to my advantage, in the presence of several noblemen. I then

requested him to give me an opportunity of finishing it, as I proposed making a present of it, as well as the little model, to his excellency. He replied that with pleasure he accepted of both, and would order all the conveniences to be given me that I could require in my business. So I subsisted upon this little favour, which in some measure restored my health; for so many ills and calamities had befallen me that I began to sink under them, but, upon this glimmering of princely encouragement, I began to comfort myself with some hopes of life.

A year being now expired since my purchasing the farm of Fonte from Sbietta, and finding that, besides all the injuries he had done me, both by poison and by chicane, the farm did not produce what he had promised: as I had, besides the contract, a writing signed by Sbietta's own hand, who had entered into an engagement before witnesses to pay me the yearly product of the farm; I addressed myself to the magistrates of the city of Florence. At that time Signor Alfonso Quistello was living: he was superintendent of the treasury, and sat with the other councillors, amongst whom were Averardo Serristori and Federigo de' Ricci. I cannot recollect the names of them all, but amongst them there was one of the Alessandri: let it suffice to observe that they were all persons of great distinction. When I had laid my case before those magistrates, they were unanimously of opinion that Sbietta should refund the money he had received from me, except Federigo de' Ricci, who at that time had connections with Sbietta. All the rest expressed their concern that Federigo de' Ricci should prevent them from deciding in my favour: amongst others, Averardo Serristori was particularly clamorous on the occasion, as was likewise one of the Alessandri. Federigo having at last so protracted the cause that the magistrates put an end to the time of their sitting, the gentlemen above mentioned came up to me one morning in the square of the Nunziata, when the magistrates had all left the court, and said with a loud voice: "Federigo de' Ricci has been

too powerful for us all, so that you lost your cause in spite of us." I shall make no observation on this subject for fear of offending those at the helm of government: let it suffice to say that I lost my cause on account of a rich citizen, who employed the grazier from whom I had bought my farm.

The duke being at Leghorn, I waited on his excellency to solicit him to dismiss me, perceiving that I had entirely recovered my health and strength: as I found myself quite out of employment I was displeased with a state of indolence; so I formed a resolution to go directly to Leghorn, where I found the duke, and met with the most gracious reception. I made some stay in that town, and every day rode out with his excellency, so that I had a fair opportunity of saying whatever I thought proper to him. The duke used to ride several miles out of Leghorn by the seaside, where he was building a little fortress; and that he might not be troubled with too great a number of attendants, he chose to have me with him as a companion. One day finding myself caressed by his excellency in a particular manner, I formed a resolution to turn the conversation to Sbietta, that is, Pier Maria of Anterigoli, and thus expressed myself: "My lord, I must lay before your excellency a most extraordinary case, by hearing which you will know the cause that prevented me from finishing the Neptune of clay, on which I was employed in my workshop. You are to understand that I purchased a farm of Sbietta for life:"—Let it here suffice that I gave the duke a circumstantial account of the whole affair, never in the least deviating from the truth, or dashing it with the smallest mixture of falsehood. When I came to the affair of the poison, I said that if ever my services had been acceptable to his excellency, he should, instead of punishing Sbietta and those who had administered the poison, confer some reward on them; for they had not given me a sufficient dose to kill me, but just enough to remove a dangerous viscosity which I had in my stomach

and intestines; and it operated in such a manner that whereas in my former state of health I might have lived only three or four years, this extraordinary sort of physic had produced such an effect that I reckoned upon having gained a new lease of twenty years: in short, I found myself better than ever, and returned thanks to the Almighty, being sensible that the saying which I had so often heard was verified, namely, that God afflicts us occasionally for our good.

The duke listened to me with the utmost attention while we rode above two miles together, and only once exclaimed, "O the wicked people!" I concluded with observing that I was highly obliged to them, and entered upon more agreeable topics of conversation. I one day accosted him just at the right season, and finding him in a humour that suited my purpose, requested his excellency to dismiss me, that I might no longer lose my time, adding that I was still able to work, and that as to what remained due to me for my Perseus, his excellency might pay me whenever he thought proper. I at the same time returned him thanks in a long speech, and with much ceremony; yet he made me no answer, but appeared to be highly offended. The day following, Signor Bartolommeo Concino, one of his excellency's chief secretaries, said to me in a sort of bravado: "The duke declares that if you desire to be dismissed you may, but that if you choose to work he will employ you; and it were to be wished you could execute as much as his excellency will please to order." I made answer "that I desired nothing more than to be employed, especially by his excellency, whose service I preferred to that of any other great personage living, whether pope, emperor, or king," adding "that I should be better pleased to serve him for a penny than another for a ducat." He replied that if my sentiments were such as I represented them, I need say no more, for we were both perfectly agreed. "Return," said he, "to Florence, and be of good cheer: the

duke wishes you well." Accordingly I returned to Florence.

As soon as I arrived at this city, a person of the name of Raffaello Scheggia, who worked in gold tissue, called at my house, and told me that he wanted to make up matters between me and Pier Maria Sbietta. I answered him that the magistrates of Florence alone could settle affairs between us, and that Sbietta must not always expect to have upon the bench a Federigo de' Ricci, ready, for a present of two fat kids, to take his part, without fear of God, or regard for his own honour, and shamefully violate justice and right. When I had uttered these words, with many others to the same effect, this Raffaello continued to remonstrate with me that it was better to eat a thrush in peace than a large capon, if it could not be had without broils and contention. He added that a lawsuit is often spun out to such a length that it would be more for my interest to dedicate that time to making some elegant piece of work, by which I should acquire much greater reputation as well as emolument. As I was sensible that his observation was just, I began to listen to what he had to propose: so that he soon compromised matters between us in the manner following. Sbietta was to take the farm of me, and pay me for it regularly seventy gold crowns per annum during my natural life. When we were come to have the contract drawn up, which was to be done by Signor Giovanni di Ser Matteo da Falgano, Sbietta said, in the manner we had settled it the farm would produce more, and could not possibly fail; therefore it was better that we should make the lease for five years, adding that he would adhere inviolably to his engagement, without ever giving occasion to any other suit. The same promises were made in the most solemn manner by the rogue of a priest, his brother; so the contract was drawn up for the term of five years. As it is my intention to enter upon another subject, and to have done with this mystery of iniquity, I shall only take notice

of what passed during fifteen years after making out the last lease. The two villains, instead of keeping any of the promises they had made me, were for returning me my farm, and did not choose to keep the lease of it any longer. I complained very much of this usage, and they had recourse to such chicanery with regard to the contract that I had no resource against their indirect proceedings. When I perceived this, I told them that the duke and the prince his son would not suffer them to do such flagrant injustice to a citizen of Florence. This menace so terrified them that they again sent to me the same Raffaello Scheggia, who had made up matters between us at first, to declare that they were not willing to pay me the seventy gold crowns they had done for five years past. I made answer that I would take nothing less. Raffaello came to me and said: "My friend Benvenuto, you know very well that I am in your interest: they have all referred the affair to me." Thereupon he showed me a writing with their names signed to it. I, who was not aware that Raffaello was their near relation, thought myself in very good hands; so I left the management of the affair entirely to him. This rogue came to me one evening, within half-an-hour after nightfall, in the month of August, and made use of many arguments and persuasions to prevail on me to sign the contract whilst I was alone, because he knew that if he deferred it till the morning the trick would be discovered. So the contract was signed, by which he engaged to pay me regularly sixty-five crowns a year in two payments, during the course of my natural life: and though I made a great stir about the affair, and would by no means submit to such terms, he showed the writing with my name to it, which made all that saw it declare me to be in the wrong. The fellow at the same time affirmed that what he had done had been for my good, and that he was entirely in my interest; so, as neither the notary, nor anybody else, knew of his being related to my adversaries, I was condemned

by the general voice: I therefore gave up the contest in time, and shall endeavour to do the best I can for the future. I likewise committed another capital error in the month of December of the following year, 1566. I purchased half the farm of Poggio from them, that is, from Sbietta and the rest, for two hundred crowns. This farm borders upon my other of Fonte, and I let it to them for three years. Herein I thought I acted wisely. I should become too prolix were I to give a full account of all the ill-usage I received from these people: I therefore leave the whole affair to the Almighty, who has always espoused my cause against those who have injured me.

Having completely finished my marble crucifix, I thought that if I raised it a few cubits above the ground it would appear to much greater advantage than if it were placed immediately upon it; so I began to show it to whomsoever had a mind to see such an exhibition. The duke and duchess, being informed of this, one day, upon their return from Pisa, came unexpectedly with a grand retinue to my workshop, in order to see this image of Christ upon the cross. It pleased them so highly that their excellencies, as well as all the nobility and gentry present, bestowed the highest encomiums on me. When I found that it gave them such satisfaction, by their extolling it to the skies, I said that the reason of my producing such a work was their having deprived me of the fine Neptune marble; and though I had undergone infinite labour in its execution, yet with pleasure I made them a present of it, thinking none more worthy of that fine piece of work than their excellencies: I only requested that before they departed they would vouchsafe to enter my humble habitation. At these words they rose with great complaisance, and, leaving the shop, entered my house, where they perceived my little model of Neptune, and the fountain, which the duchess had never seen before. So greatly was her excellency affected with the sight that she burst into a

loud exclamation of surprise, and, addressing herself to the duke, said: "I declare, my lord, I could never have formed a conception of anything so beautiful." The duke answered her more than once, "Did I not tell you it would prove so?" Thus they talked a long time in praise of my abilities, and the duchess seemed, as it were, to ask pardon for her past treatment of me. She told me that it was her pleasure I should make choice of a piece of marble myself, and begin immediately to work upon it. To these kind words I made answer that if they gave me the means, I should, for their sake, cheerfully engage in so arduous an undertaking. The duke replied: "Benvenuto, you shall have all the helps you require, and I likewise shall give you some of my own contriving which will be far more effectual than the others." Having expressed himself in these obliging terms, he withdrew, together with the duchess, and left me highly pleased. Several weeks, however, passed without my being taken any further notice of; insomuch that, seeing no orders given for furnishing me with what I wanted, I began to be half distracted and in despair.

At this very juncture the Queen-dowager of France despatched Signor Baccio del Bene to our duke, to solicit the loan of a sum of money: the duke in the kindest manner granted her request; at least so it was generally reported. As Signor Baccio del Bene and I were intimate friends, we were very glad to see each other; and he gave me an account of all the favours conferred on him by his excellency. Upon this occasion he asked me what works I had in hand: I mentioned to him the affair of Neptune and the fountain, and all the duchess had done to injure me. He then told me that the queen had a strong desire to finish the sepulchral monument of her husband, King Henry, and that Daniel of Volterra had undertaken to make a great horse of bronze for that purpose; but he was too far advanced in years, and the monument required a variety of ornaments, so that if I chose to return to

France and again take possession of my castle I should be abundantly supplied with whatever I wanted, in case I was willing to serve her Majesty. I desired Baccio to apply to the duke, telling him that if his excellency consented I would return to France with pleasure. Baccio then told me in high glee that we should set out for France together, looking upon the affair as concluded. The day following he happened to have an interview with the duke, when he took occasion to speak of me, and told his excellency that, if it were agreeable to him, the queen his mistress would take me into her service. The duke made answer: "Benvenuto is a man of great genius, as everybody knows; but now he chooses to work no longer." Thus the conversation was changed to other topics.

The next day I repaired to Baccio, who repeated to me all that had passed between him and the duke. Upon which I began to be quite out of patience: "If," said I, "when his excellency did not employ me, I of myself executed one of the most difficult pieces of work that ever was seen, which cost me upwards of two hundred crowns, what would have been the result in case his excellency had set me to work? I must say he does me wrong: he has hurt me greatly." The gentleman repeated this answer of mine to the duke, who declared that he had been jesting, and what he meant was to keep me in his own service. This provoked me greatly, and I had several times a great mind to decamp. The Queen of France did not care to propose the thing any more to the duke, for fear of offending him; so that I was obliged to stay, much against my will. About this time the duke went a journey with his whole court, and his sons, excepting only the prince, who was then in Spain: they travelled along the sea-coast of Siena, and in that manner arrived at Pisa. The unwholesome air affected the cardinal before any of the rest, so that he was attacked by a malignant fever, which in a few days put an end to

his life. He was one of the duke's chief supports, and highly beloved by him, being a person of great virtues and abilities; consequently his loss was severely felt. I let several days pass, till I thought their tears and grief must in some measure have subsided; and then I repaired to Pisa.

[Here ends Benvenuto Cellini's manuscript.]

APPENDIX

THE following passage from Thomas Roscoe's (1791–1871) preface to his revised translation of the *Memoirs*, dated Jan. 1, 1847 (his first edition was published in 1822), gives a few particulars of the history of the book and may be of interest here. Several MSS. of the original Italian (which was first printed in 1730) are in existence, but the most authentic one seems to be that in the Laurentian library referred to below:—

"In presenting a new edition of this curious autobiography to the public, it may be proper to state what additional claims it possesses, in addition to its intrinsic attractions. In the year 1830, Signor Giuseppe Molini, of Florence, brought out a new and most valuable edition of Cellini's Life, printed word for word from the original MS., as dictated by the author, forming one of the volumes of his 'Biblioteca Italiana Portatile.'

"Aware probably of my preceding English edition, printed in 1822, collated with the text, and enriched with notes from the Milan edition of G. P. Carpani, Signor Molini had the kindness to present me with a copy of his new Cellini. From this source I have derived several interesting additions, of which I have availed myself in the present popular form of publication.

"The learned Italian editor describes 'this precious document' as having been accidentally discovered by Signor Poirot, in 1810, at the shop of 'one of' our 'booksellers' —we are led to infer—at Florence. At the death of the 'Segretario' (Poirot) in 1825, it passed, with all his 'MSS.,' into the Laurentian library, in compliance with

the tenor of his will. With permission of the grand duke, the editor of the 'Biblioteca' took a verbatim copy, which he collated with the Milan edition of 1821, from the Bettoni press. This is stated to have been done with the most scrupulous care and attention. Without assigning reasons for its non-appearance until 1830, he proceeds in his examination of the manuscript, in order clearly to establish its authenticity. 'It consists,' says the able and sagacious editor, 'of a volume in folio, of 519 pages, numbered only in part, with a rough cover of parchment, and tied by bands of the same material. On the back of the first covering is written, "De' libri d' Andrea de' Lorenzo Cavalcanti;" and on the right of the first page, "This most precious book was ever held in the highest esteem by the good, and, to me, always dear, Signor Andrea Cavalcanti, my father, who would permit no one to copy it; resisting even the repeated solicitations made to him by his most serene and reverend highness the Prince Cardinal Leopold of Tuscany, &c., because—

"Sol negli Arabi regni una Fenice
Vive a se stessa, e genetrice e prole,
Onde del mondo è in pregio, a' rai del sole,
E vil quel che d' avere a ciascun lice."

Lone in its happy realms one Phenix dwells,
Lives to itself, parent and offspring both—
So by the world is priz'd—rare worth is loth
To court applause—what's each one's rankly smells.

On the back of this is written, in Cellini's own hand, the sonnet and prose comment on his life, given in the Supplement of the present volume. In the second page begins the autobiography as dictated to the son of M. de Goro Vestri, which is continued up to page 460. Then follow three more, and one half of a fourth, in an unknown hand; the remainder, to the close of the work, is in Cellini's handwriting. At the end of the volume are five blank pages, with exception of the first, on which are the words, "dappoi me n' andai a Pisa." (I afterwards went to Pisa.)'

"That this is the original volume which Cellini sent to Benedetto Varchi, for his revision, Signor Molini entertains no doubt. In various places, as he has shown in his interest-

ing annotations, words inscribed by Varchi's hand occur; and it is no less evident from the sonnet written by that eminent poet and critic, upon the supposed death of his friend Benvenuto.

"The fortunate and proud possessor of the original 'MS.,' whose filial piety in the above record testifies at once to the wide fame of Cellini, and the jealous dilettanti spirit of his father, made a gift, it appears, of his family treasure to Redi, who extracted from it the words which were afterwards inserted in the Tuscan Vocabulary. How the long-treasured heirloom subsequently found its way from the learned Redi's library, through a great variety of hands, till it arrived at the shop of Signor Cecchino—a man justly esteemed by the collectors of curious books—Signor Molini is at a loss, equally with the rest of the world, to account.

"That this is the original document further appears from the fact of Cellini's having never made a copy, so that these were dispersed throughout various libraries, obtained doubtless from some clandestine copy, and, in Molini's opinion, all imperfect; each copyist having been found to add to the errors of his predecessors. Without reference to these, therefore, Signor Molini adhered closely to the original text; a rule that has been as strictly observed in this new English edition. Numerous omissions in the former translation have now been supplied, and errors and inadvertencies rectified, which often injured the effect of the narrative, and even rendered obscure the meaning of the author."

And the following paragraphs from Roscoe's *Supplement* may be read in continuation of the text:—

"From the period of the death of the Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici, in 1562, at which event the narrative of Cellini breaks off, this celebrated artist, then in the sixty-second year of his age, does not appear to have been engaged in any work of much importance. After the execution of his grand achievement of the Perseus, indeed, the account of his life seems to have been the most successful of all the labours of his remaining years. Many extracts from a notebook which he kept, containing various memoranda (called *ricordi*) of his domestic and professional transactions, have been pre-

served, and even published; but these are in general trivial and uninteresting. . . . His own Memoir was begun, as we have seen, towards the end of the year 1558; and the greater part of it seems to have been submitted to the inspection of Varchi in less than six months after, according to the following letter, which has been preserved:—

"'*To the most excellent and learned* Signor BENEDETTO VARCHI.

"'I am quite rejoiced with what you say about this plain story of my life, and that it pleases you better, in this familiar way, than if polished and revised by another; by which the truth with which I have described everything might not so clearly appear. For I have taken care to say nothing relating to such things as my memory was doubtful of; so that I might only speak the real truth, leaving out many wonderful events that any other person would have been careful to make the most of. But having had occasion to relate several astonishing actions and great affairs, and not wishing to make too bulky a volume, I thought it preferable to leave out many of the lesser ones. I send my servant in order that you may give him my cloak-bag and my book: and, as I think that you cannot have read the whole of it, and not wishing to occupy your time with such a trifle, as well as because you obliged me in what I asked of you, and for which I now sincerely thank you and am truly satisfied, I beg you will not take the trouble of proceeding farther with it, but send it back. As to the Sonnet, I had much rather you would keep it by you, in order that it may receive a little polish from your unrivalled pen. Henceforward I hope to come and see you, and you know I am always glad to be of use to you in every way that lies in my power. Take care of your health, I beg of you, and preserve me in your esteem.

"'Always your very humble servant,

"'BENVENUTO CELLINI.

"'FLORENCE, *May* 2, 1558.'

"Of the sonnet to which Benvenuto alludes in this letter an imitation is attempted:—

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SONNET.

"As o'er my past and painful life I pause,
But not unheedful of Heaven's gracious care,
Shielding the gift it gave: in mind I bear
Proud deeds I did, yet live. In honour's cause
I served, and high adventures were my laws,
Till fortune bow'd to toils no cowards dare,
And worth and virtue bore me onwards, where
Leaving the crowd, I pass'd on with applause.
One thought still irks me: that my life's best prime
Of richest promise, vain and idly fled,
Bearing my best resolves, like air away,
Which I could now lament, but have no time.
Lo *welcome* born,[1] I proudly raise my head,
Fair Florence' son—bright flower of Tuscany.

"There is also the following memorandum in Cellini's handwriting relating to the manuscript:—

"'I at first began this account of my life in my own handwriting, as may easily be seen from some of the folded leaves; but finding that I lost too much of my time, and thinking it an unconscionable piece of vanity, it luckily happened that I met with a young lad, the son of Michel di Goro della Pieve a Groppino, only about fourteen years of age, and rather weak and sickly. I set him to work, to write down what I dictated, composing my life whilst I laboured hard at my business; and it thus gave me more pleasure, and even made me more industrious than before. In this manner I got rid of such an irksome charge, leaving it to him until such time as I hope to summon resolution to take it up again.'

"By a minute, dated December 12, 1554, it appears that the claims of our author to be admitted into the rank of the Florentine nobility were on that day approved. His own narrative contains few particulars of the events of that and several succeeding years, but it is evident that he was involved in litigation and embarrassments. In 1558 he received the tonsure and the first ecclesiastical orders; and two years afterwards, at the age of threescore, led a bride to the hymeneal altar. . . .

[1] Alluding to his own name of Benvenuto.

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"Cellini had on the 16th of March 1564 the melancholy honour of being deputed to attend the obsequies of his great master and friend Michael Angelo Buonarroti: Bartolommeo Ammanati was the other eminent sculptor who accompanied Cellini; while Giorgio Vasari and Agnolo di Cosimo, called Bronzino, represented the painters of Florence on this solemn occasion.

"About the year 1560, Benvenuto married a female who had nursed him with great care during the illness which he attributed to poison, suspected to have been administered to him by the Sbietta family. He had made a vow to this effect during his indisposition, and was probably induced to take this step by the existence of an illegitimate son, whom he afterwards had naturalised. It is supposed that his wife was the same person who was in his service at the time of casting the Perseus, and whom he mentions as the most prudent and kindest of women. The name given in the Life is, however, Fiore, whilst his wife is called in his will Piera; but this difference might very probably happen from the mistakes of transcribers or printers, which in this work have been innumerable. By this wife, Cellini had five legitimate children, two of whom died in their infancy.

"Previously to his marriage he had adopted one Antonio, the son of Domenico Sputasenni and Dorotea his wife, who had for about four years served Cellini as a model for his Medusa, and other female figures. Sputasenni, a profligate character, being sentenced to imprisonment, his wife, with her infant, applied for asistance to Cellini, who not only maintained her husband during his confinement, but supported her also; and at length adopted the child, intending, as he then had no son of his own, to make him a skilful artist. But the boy turning out exceedingly stupid, idle, and indocile . . . became a friar, by the name of Frà Lattanzio.

"After Cellini's marriage, Sputasenni, who had long resided at Pisa, came to Florence, and contrary to Cellini's express commands, took the young man away with him. Cellini, having then a child of his own, renounced all further connection with the Sputasenni family, and considered himself discharged of all responsibility with respect to the son. But in 1570, Sputasenni the father commenced a suit against Cellini, to compel him to provide for Antonio as his adopted son, and to secure for the latter a share of Cellini's property

after his decease. It should seem that Benvenuto had suffered a judgment by default, for a sentence was given against him, which, upon petition to the duke, was annulled.

"On the 15th day of February 1570 this most ingenious artist and extraordinary man departed this life. His funeral is recorded in the register of the purveyors to the Academy of Drawing, marked with the letter E at the papers 31, from the year 1563 to 1571, as follows: 'I record it, that on the present eighteenth of February, was buried Signor Benvenuto Cellini, the sculptor; and he was buried by his own direction in our chapter-house of the Nunziata, with a grand funeral pomp, at which were present our whole academy, together with the company. When we had repaired to his house, and were seated in proper order, after all the monks had passed by, the bier was lifted up by four of the academicians, and carried with the usual attendance to the Nunziata: the ceremonies of the Church being there performed over it, it was taken by the same academicians, and conveyed to the chapter-house; the ceremonies of divine worship being repeated, a monk, who had been charged the evening before to compose the funeral sermon of Signor Benvenuto, in praise both of his life and works, and his excellent moral qualities, mounted the pulpit, and preached a funeral sermon, which was highly approved of by the whole academy and by the people, who struggled to get into the chapter, as well to see the body of Benvenuto, as to hear the commendation of his good qualities. The whole ceremony was performed with a great number of wax-lights, both in the church and the chapter-house thereunto belonging.'"

The reader may also be referred to the preliminary essay on Cellini, prefixed to John Addington Symonds's translation of "The Life," 2 vols., 1888, and to M. Eugène Plon's excellent work: "Benvenuto Cellini, Orfèvre, Médailleur, Sculpteur" (Paris, 1883), which has a full list of his productions.

LETTERS

THE following letters of Benvenuto Cellini are published with his Treatises upon the Goldsmith's Art, and upon Sculpture; where they are stated to have been extracted from a collection of Letters upon the Arts of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, Rome, 1754.

LETTER I

TO MONSIGNORE BENEDETTO VARCHI

"So I learn from your last very agreeable letter, that you would shortly like us to meet together at Venice, as that place will be rather more convenient for you than elsewhere. To this I reply, that your wishes have already met mine. When you are pleased, I am so; and at the period we shall appoint, you may depend upon seeing me at Venice, or at any or all other places you may think best. But it vexes me to think that our dear Luca cannot join us, as he wrote to me he would; his plaguy law-suit will prevent him. Do you think, however, he could not be prevailed upon to come when it is ended? Pray try what you can do, for I vow to you that if he can contrive it, it will be quite convenient for me to stop for him during the interval, till he shall come. By that time too, Albertaccio del Bene, a particular friend of mine, will be coming to study at Padua; and we can then mount horse together, and spur as far as Loreti; and if we are not lucky enough to find him there,—why we must defer our embassy until his return, and ride post back.

"Now, my dear Benedetto, you tell me that our good friend Bembo (Monsignore Bembo) is letting his beard grow, at which tidings I am assuredly well pleased; for we shall thus be able to strike off a much more beautiful head than if without the beard; and to say the truth, as matters stand, now that he has fairly got the whim of letting it grow, I

will honestly inform you that two months will not be sufficient time to allow it to come to perfection. I assure you it will not then have reached above two fingers' length, insomuch that if I were to make a medallion of his face in that imperfect fashion, it would neither bear a fair resemblance to him when the beard was full grown, nor when he was clean shaved; least of all in this last case. It appears to me that if we wish to make something that will look well, we must suffer his beard to grow as long as it will, and this it will have attained, I trust, by next Lent, when we shall be able to take an impression much better. At the same time, do not suspect me of wishing to throw any delay in the way of its completion; for I swear that I am ready at a moment's warning from you, and will forthwith mount horse with as much alacrity as ever I set about anything in the world. Upon this I pin my credit; and if you should agree with me on the subject, and that it would be well to write our mind to his excellency, and that I also should do it (ill as I am able), let me only hear from you, and I will write. Moreover, never doubt about my coming, for, I repeat, I am ready; and in all things, at all times, most ready to obey your commands.

"According to what I hear, from our friend Luca, it must be all over with my good old Piloto by this time. Yes, he must be dead, and I feel much concerned; but patience, &c. I will say no more. So heaven keep you, and farewell. Remember, I am always at your commands.

"Your

"BENVENUTO CELLINI, goldsmith.

"*From Rome, on the 9th Sept.* 1536."

LETTER II

TO THE SAME

"My most virtuous, most courteous, and magnificent M. Benedetto Varchi,—Much honoured Sir,

"Believe me, I could much better explain my reasons to you in favour of so grand an art by word of mouth, than by my pen; inasmuch as I am a bad dictator, and a worse writer. Yet, such as I am, behold me ready for a tilt. I assert that the art of sculpture, among all the arts con-

nected with design, is at least seven times greater than any other, for the following reason: why, sir, a statue of true sculpture ought to have seven points of view, which ought all to boast equal excellence. . . . I maintain that this wonderful art of the statuary cannot appear to advantage, unless the artist be well versed in all the noblest branches connected with it: for instance, in wishing to display a soldier, with all the splendour and brave qualities that belong to him, it is requisite that the artist should himself be extremely valiant, with good skill in arms: and in representing an orator, he too ought to be eloquent, and deeply imbued with a knowledge of letters. If he be modelling some great musician, he ought to have a variety of musical instruments by him, in order to see how best to dispose some choice one in his statue's hand; and so too by the poet and others—of all of which, however, the excellent Bronzino has already fully written. Truly, we might find an infinite number of proud things to say upon the grand art of sculpture, had not enough already been advanced to satisfy so great a virtuoso as you are known to be. However, I have touched upon some points as far as my humble capacity would permit, and I would once more remind you, as before, that sculpture is the parent of all other arts, at all connected with design; for the man who can become an excellent sculptor, in a good manner, will meet with no sort of difficulty in making himself a good designer of perspective and architecture, as well as a much greater painter than he who is not well acquainted with sculpture. Painting, in fact, is nothing else much than a tree, a man, or any other object, reflected in the water. The distinction between sculpture and painting is as great as between the shadow and the substance. So the moment I received your letter, with lively ardour I seized the pen, and ran over these few hasty lines in a great passion; and so in a great passion I make an end, recommending myself, however, to you as usual. I will also do all you have requested me.

"Farewell, and likewise wish me well.

"Always ready for your commands,

"BENVENUTO CELLINI.

"*From Florence, the 28th day of January*, 1546."

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LETTER III

TO N. N.

"Since my very illustrious and excellent lord so commands me, that I should myself demand and put a price upon my work of the Perseus, which since the month of April 1554 has been exhibited in a finished state in the Piazza Lodge belonging to your excellency, and, God be praised! to the entire satisfaction of the whole public, of which there is no similar instance relating to any master upon record at all approaching to it;—since such is the truth, I say, I would humbly entreat your excellency, that you would give me, for my incessant exertions during nine years, all that may appear most pleasing to your excellency's profound and most discreet judgment: whatever it may amount to, coming along with your gracious good wishes, it will be held amply liberal, and much more to my satisfaction than by demanding any sum, though I might receive much more than my demand.

"And now, to dismiss all farther delay (of which there has already been too much), as you have compelled me to state my opinion I must obey; and I declare that had I to execute such a work for any other prince, I would not do it for fifteen thousand gold ducats; and, of a surety, no other man would contemplate, much less be enabled to achieve, such a work. Being, however, your excellency's devoted and loving vassal, I will confess myself content with the amount of five thousand ducats, with the amount of five thousand more in immovable property; because I am resolved to spend the remainder of my life in your excellency's service; and if it should be thought I have done great things in producing so beautiful a statue in this my first, what may not your excellency expect far more wonderful in my second attempt for you!

"Truly, I hope to leave both the best of the ancients and moderns behind me, and to take the opinion of the world upon it, insomuch as to reflect great praise and credit upon your excellency's patronage and judgment. At the same time, I conjure you, by the most solemn appeals to Heaven's power and mercy, that you would despatch my affair forthwith, and relieve me from the horrible torture and suspense

I have so long suffered, for I cannot stand it. Your excellency may recollect that I have always declared that I would cheerfully devote the remnant of my humble powers that has survived a happier period, to the ornament of your excellency's glorious fortunes. Moreover, your excellency will consider that had I availed myself of the many advantages I possessed among a set of barbarians, I should before this time have amassed an immense treasure.

"Notwithstanding this, I would rather receive a single crown at the hands of your excellency, than a whole fortune from any other prince; and am at the same time ever wearying Heaven with prayers for your excellency's preservation.

"BENVENUTO CELLINI.

"*From Florence*, 1554."

LETTER IV

TO THE VERY MAGNIFICENT AND MOST VIRTUOUS M. BENEDETTO VARCHI

"Alas! my much honoured friend, I have to inform you of the loss of my only son, who had nearly completed his education,—a son than whom I do not think there ever was anything dearer to me on earth; and yet he has been snatched from me in the short space of four days; and such was my grief, that I verily thought I should have followed him to the grave; for I see very clearly that I can never hope to repair such a loss—such a treasure as he was to me. I have received permission from the holy brethren of the Nunziata, as some kind of consolation to me in this hour, to have a tomb prepared, which shall also be ready to receive me, when it shall please God that I should take my rest by his side; just laid in that humble fashion which may best suit my poor finances on the occasion. In the meantime, it is my wish to paint his little monument with the figures of two cherubs with torches in their hands, and between them an epitaph, such as you will see below, in my rude unpolished style. Now as I know that with your admirable qualities, you can much better express what I would wish to have said, if you will please to turn it either into Tuscan or Latin, whichsoever you judge best, you will

confer a kindness; and if I am troublesome, command me in turn, for I am always most eager to serve you.

"*From Florence, the 22d of May*, 1563.

"My idea, which I wish to have developed in your language, is as follows:—

"'Giovan Cellini, a Benvenuto solo
Figlio, qui jace, morte al mondo il tolse.
Tenero danni, mai le parche sciolse
Tal speme in fil dall' uno all' altro Polo.'

"Always prepared for your service,

"BENVENUTO CELLINI."

NOTES

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25 *a salamander*—The popular belief was that a salamander's body was so icy cold that it could live in fire without hurt and even extinguish fire.

fulling-mills—Mills for condensing fibrous cloth so as to thicken and therefore strengthen it.

26 *Arti Maggiori*—"In the year 1266 the Florentine people, to resist the influence of the aristocracy, established seven classes, termed 'Arti Maggiori,' each having a consul or leader. Among these were enumerated judges and notaries, manufacturers of wool, traders in foreign merchandise, brokers, physicians, mercers, silk and fur dealers, &c. &c. All those entitled to rank in the 'Arti Maggiori' were, at that period, considered as gentlemen."—*Roscoe.*

30 *The Council of Eight*—The Florentine magistrates who superintended internal affairs.

46 *Frà Girolamo*—*i.e.* Savonarola.

50 *the chapel of Michael Angelo*—*i.e.* The Sistine.

61 *a jennet*—A small Spanish horse.

94 *falconet*—A small cannon about 6 feet long, carrying a shot about 2 inches in diameter.

95 *swivel*—A small cannon worked on a pivot.

demi-culverin—A name applied to cannon about 10 feet long, carrying balls from 4 inches to 4½ inches in diameter.

116 *datary*—The officer of the Papal Court whose duty it was to affix the *datum Romae* to Papal Bulls.

120 *carlin*—A silver coin worth about 4d.

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128 *shock-dog*—A dog with shaggy hair.

141 *lignum vitæ*—Guaiacum or Brazil-wood, used frequently by apothecaries as an acrid stimulant and a favourite cure in the sixteenth century.

as sound as a roach—Possibly a corruption of the French *roche* = rock.

154 *pintaculo*—A linen napkin folded so as to leave five corners, for the five senses, in great favour with magicians.

165 *partisan*—A halberd or blade-headed staff with lateral projections.

192 *Galen*—A Greek physician of the second century, and a commentator on the works of Hippocrates, the greatest physician of antiquity (fifth century B.C.).

263 *abbreviator*—One whose duty it was "to abridge the petitions granted by the Pope into proper forms for being converted into Bulls."

275 *tarantula* — A venomous spider, the virulence of whose bite has, however, been much exaggerated.

the Chronicles of Villani—Giovanni Villani's *Croniche* (or Istorie) *Fiorentine*.

280 *the preacher Fojano*—Benedetto da Fojano, a popular and learned priest of democratic views who was incarcerated in the Castle of St. Angelo by the Pope in 1530.

298 *imps her wings*—To imp, in falconry, is to strengthen the wings by adding new feathers.

317 *one of those English crab-rings*—? Cramp-ring, a ring worn to prevent cramp.

364 *I paid the notaries, &c.*—Roscoe does not translate the details of the trial. Cellini was accused of illegal intercourse.

372 *a wooden socle*—A plain block resembling a pedestal, but not possessing a cornice or base.

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387 *cerbottana balls*—"A short hollow stick, 4 cubits long, through which little balls of earth are driven by the force of the breath, and used particularly to kill birds."—*Roscoe.*

414 *I afterwards heard*—After this point the MS. is in the handwriting of Cellini himself.

430 *to make a new one*—"In order the better to understand what is here said, we shall shortly state from the 'Trattato sopra la Scultura' of Benvenuto, the manner in which he proceeded in the execution of his Perseus. 'This statue was intended to be of bronze, five ells in height, of one piece, and hollow. Cellini first formed his model of clay more slender than the statue was intended to be. He then baked it, and covered it with wax of the thickness of a finger, which he modelled into the perfect form of the statue. In order to effect in concave what the wax represented in convex, he covered the wax with clay, and baked this second covering. Thus the wax dissolving, and escaping by fissures left open for the purpose, he obtained between the first model and the second covering a space for the introduction of the metal. In order to introduce the bronze without moving the first model, he gently placed the model in a pit dug under the furnace, and by means of pipes and apertures in the model itself he introduced the liquid metal. It is evident from this, that into the right foot of the statue, which was more than six ells under the bottom of the furnace, the metal must descend through its appropriate duct in a much cooler state than into the higher parts.'"—*Roscoe.*

456 *biting his finger*—An expression of contempt.

459 *the order of the Servi*—The Servites, or Religious Servants of the Holy Virgin, founded 1233, by certain Florentines.

A LIST OF POPES

who occupied the chair of St. Peter during the lifetime of Benvenuto Cellini

	Date of Accession
Alexander VI. (Spaniard)	1492
Pius III. (Italian)	1503
Julius II. (Italian)	1503
Leo X. (Italian)	1513
Hadrian VI. (Dutch)	1522
Clement VII. (Italian)	1523
Paul III. (Italian)	1534
Julius III. (Italian)	1550
Marcellus II. (Italian)	1555
Paul IV. (Italian)	1555
Pius IV. (Italian)	1559
Pius V. (Italian)	1566
Gregory XIII. (Italian)	1572

A LIST OF DATES

1492 Columbus discovers America

1494 Charles VIII. of France in Italy. Savonarola

1496 Michael Angelo's "Pietà" at St. Peter's

1497 Vasco di Gama rounds the Cape

1499 Leonardo da Vinci's "The Last Supper"

1500 Birth of Charles V.

1503 Leonardo da Vinci begins "Mona Lisa"

1504 Michael Angelo's "David"

1508 Michael Angelo's frescos for the roof of the Sistine Chapel

1509 Henry VIII., King of England

1510 Ariosto's "Orlando Furioso"

Death of Botticelli

1512 The French driven from Italy. The Medici re-enter Florence: they had been turned out in 1494. They were expelled again in 1527 and were restored again in 1530

1515 Raphael's "Sistine Madonna"

1517 The Reformation begins by Luther's attack on Indulgences

1519 Charles V. elected Emperor

Death of Leonardo da Vinci (age 67)

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1519 Titian's "Assumption of the Virgin"

1520 Death of Raphael (age 37)

1527 Sack of Rome by the Imperial Army

1528 Death of Dürer

1533 Michael Angelo begins his "Last Judgment" for the Sistine Chapel. It occupied him for eight years.

1534 Michael Angelo's "Moses"

1535 Charles V. entered Rome, after the expedition to Tunis

1536 Death of Erasmus. He "laid the egg that Luther hatched"

1543 Death of Copernicus

Death of Holbein

1546 Death of Luther

Michael Angelo designs the dome of St. Peter's

1547 Edward VI. of England

Death of Francis I.

1553 Mary, Queen of England

Death of Rabelais

1555 Abdication of Charles V.

1558 Elizabeth, Queen of England

1564 Death of Michael Angelo (age 89)

Birth of Shakespeare

Birth of Galileo

Death of Calvin

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